Marxism Today

Theoretical and Discussion Journal of the Communist Party

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Reuben Falber
Maruja Echegoyen
Phil Leeson
John Lewis

Jim Brookshaw
Dave Priscott

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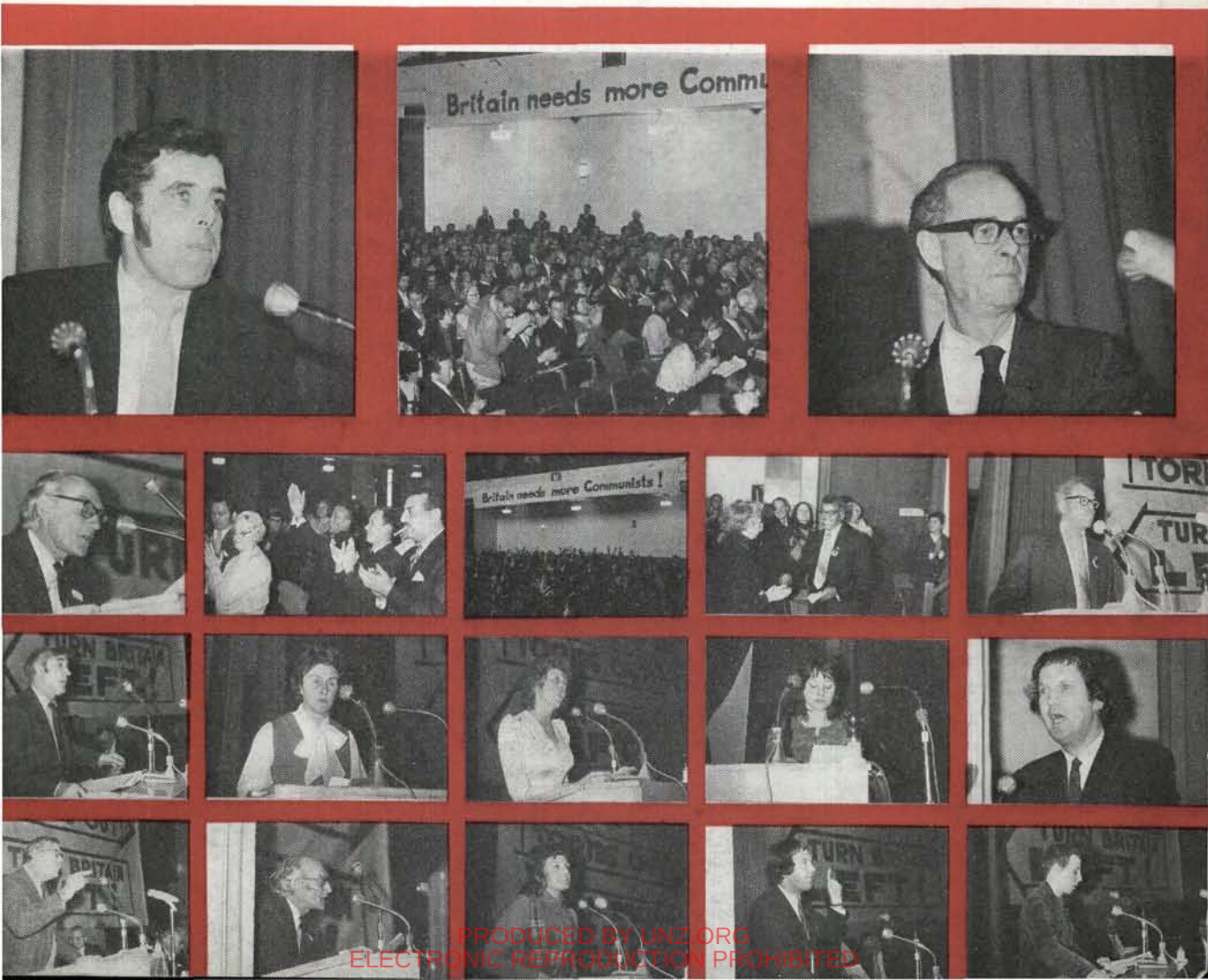

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MARXISM TODAY

THEORETICAL AND DISCUSSION JOURNAL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

Volume 16 Number 1

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Editorial Comments

1971 saw the development, by the Tory Government, of a major offensive against the working class, the trade unions and other sections of the working people.

Central to this offensive, in the interests of maximum profits, was the Industrial Relations Bill, now an Act, by which the Government hopes to paralyse the trade union movement and weaken its fighting capacity.

Side by side with the Industrial Relations Act is the deliberate creation of more than a million unemployed, who with their dependants number over four million men women and children directly affected and suffering from lowered living standards, attacks on the Social Services, the robbing of school milk from children of seven plus years of age, the outrageous increases in rents and the preparation for even greater increases by the Tory Housing Finance Bill, steeply rising prices, particularly foods and the certainty of even greater price increases if the Government's desire to drag us into the Common Market is successful.

But the resistance of the workers reached heights not seen in recent years. The demonstrations against the Bill organised by the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions on December 8, 1970 and on January 12 1971, those organised by the TUC especially the one on February 21 in London, the biggest demonstration seen for many years, and finally the March and Lobby of April and November 24 all are high water marks in the struggle against the Tory Government and its attacks on the working class.

The workers are fighting back and are refusing to accept Tory hunger policies and unemployment. This is shown by the magnificent struggles of the Upper Clyde Shipbuilding workers, the British Steel Corporation workers of the River Don, the workers at Plessey's and thousands of other workers throughout the country who are refusing to be scrapped.

The millions of workers, too, who are demanding and fighting for higher wages, shorter hours and additional holidays all bear witness to this magnificent fighting spirit.

A further development of very great significance is the strengthening of unions by a number of very important amalgamations. The September Trades Union Congress continued the leftward swing of the trade union movement and its decisions provide a rallying ground for a really major fight back.

The Labour Party Conference too moved to the left and its decisions opposing entry into the Common Market and for the complete repeal of the Industrial Relations Act have been warmly welcomed by the whole Trade Union and Labour Movement.

Finally, as can be seen from the main article in this issue, the Communist Party Congress held at the end of November, worked out a programme of struggle around which all sections of the left can unite.

AFGHANISTAN

It is not very often that news is published in Britain about the progressive movement in Afghanistan. In fact it could be said that hardly any news of any kind about Afghanistan appears in the British newspapers. It may therefore interest readers to know that in recent months the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan has gained considerable support and has been able to organise a number of huge demonstrations in the capital, Kabul, and in other provinces. A recent letter received in London describes a whole series of such demonstrations held on October 25, 1971, on the occasion of what is known as "Third of Aqrab". This is the day on which a democratic struggle against despotism began seven years ago and on which a number of young workers and students were killed by reactionary forces.

On the occasion of the demonstrations this year in which hundreds of thousands of people took part, one of the members of the People's Democratic Party, Mr. Abdul Rahman was killed by fanatical priests in the province of Laghman. The priests threw him down from the second floor of a building and then killed him with knives and axes, after which they dragged him through the streets in the presence of the police. This event took place after the end of the demonstration when most of the demonstrators had dispersed. When news of this outrage was known in Kabul on the following day, a huge march of thousands was held all the way

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from Kabul to Laghman province and back again to the capital. The next day the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan held a huge demonstration in Kabul in which many thousands of people took part and which was supported by other political parties. The meeting was addressed by one of the leaders of the People's Democratic Party, Mr. Babrak Karmal, who declared that despite such terroristic acts the people will continue their struggle for democracy until they defeat the present tyranny and establish a fully liberated, democratic regime.

THE LIMA CONFERENCE

One thousand five hundred delegates, representing 95 Third World Countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, and well over one thousand million people, met in Lima, the capital of Peru, in the early part of September last to discuss a common policy in preparation for the Third United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) which will be held in Santiago, Chile, in April.

Overshadowing the Conference were the special problems created for the developing countries by the world capitalist monetary crisis and Nixon's "package" deal aimed at defending the dollar, as well as the worsening of the economic situation in these countries.

For example, the share of these countries in world trade, has dropped from 27 per cent to 17 per cent over the past 10 years. It is calculated that Nixon's surcharge on imports will mean an annual loss for them of two hundred million dollars. The currency crisis now affecting all industralised capitalist countries, threatens the international and foreign trading relations of all the countries of the three continents since all of them are dependent to a very great degree on exports, especially to the USA.

Some interesting features of the Conference were, firstly, the presence of representatives of various international organisations, including Mr. Malik, the President of the United Nations Assembly. He made history by being the first President to leave a UN Assembly which was in full session, to attend such a Conference. Secondly the fact that for the first time Cuba was represented. It had previously been excluded as a result of US machinations. The Conference unanimously adopted two documents, the "Lima Declaration" and an "Action Programme" about which a great deal will most certainly be heard at the coming UNCTAD Conference.

Among some of the points they contain, are demands for a change in the existing currency exchange system; criticism of the protectionist measures being undertaken by the industrialised countries, especially by the USA; demands for better financial and technical assistance; diminution of the huge arms expenditures being undertaken by the industrialised countries; criticism of colonialism, racial discrimination, and especially of the attempts of the industrialised countries to solve the crises in which they find themselves at the expense of the developing countries.

We hope to publish extracts from the "Lima Declaration" and "Action Programme" in future issues.

NEW HUNGARIAN ECONOMIC WRITING

One can welcome unreservedly the appearance recently of an increasing number of books by Hungarian economists, hitherto little known to us. Since the Hungarian economy is highly dependent on foreign trade, it is not surprising that several of these should be concerned with international trade, and in particular the problems of trade and so-called "international division of labour" among socialist countries. Following the appearance of the collection of Prof. Istvan Friss's articles and papers on problems of planning and economic reform (*Economic Laws, Policy, Planning,* Budapest 1971), there have now come three others, two of them on foreign trade. The first is by the foreign trade expert, Dr. Tibor Kiss, *International Division of Labour in Open Economics* (Budapest 1971). Its sub-title is "With Special Regard to the CMEA," i.e., the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (sometimes called Comecon). This discusses a number of still-controversial issues such as economic integration and the mechanism of exchange between socialist countries, the role of prices etc. The second is a collection of essays by different hands edited by the late Professor Imre Vajda (who six years ago wrote *The Role of Foreign Trade in a Socialist Economy*) and Prof. M. Simai. This one is called *Foreign Trade in a Planned Economy,* and is published by the Cambridge University Press, 1971, price £4.80. It discusses very frankly a number of the difficulties and issues that have faced, and still do face, the CMEA. Finally, there is an imposing and large volume collecting to-

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gether all the articles and papers of the long-standing Communist and economic theorist, Peter Erdos: *Contributions to the Theory of Capitalist Money, Business Fluctuations and Crisis* (Budapest 1971). This has incidentally quite a lot in it about Keynes-and-all-that, of an understanding and creative Marxist kind.

CHRISTIAN MARXIST DIALOGUE

Our readers will have seen reference in previous issues to Christian Marxist Dialogues held at Spode House, a Catholic Education Centre in the Midlands, every year, generally in late January.

They owe their success to the energy, enthusiasm and organisational drive of Mr. Ron O'Toole. These dialogues bring together Catholics, Christians of other denominations, Marxists, and anyone else interested. They discuss important contemporary problems from the differing standpoints of those participating, hoping in this way to lay the basis for common action.

This year the Fourth Annual Dialogue will be held over the weekend Friday, January 28, 1972 (evening) to Sunday afternoon January 30 and will discuss the "Role of the Trade Unions". Speakers will be Bill Warman, past President of the Sheet Metal Workers Union, an attache of the Bulgarian Embassy and a worker priest.

As is customary at these dialogues, there will also be seminars and discussion groups. All interested are invited to write to Mr. Ron O'Toole, Spode House, Rugeley, Staffs, for further information. It is much to be hoped that this interesting dialogue will be very well attended.

MARXIST BOOKS FOR 1972

Lawrence and Wishart will be publishing several important and original new works of Marxism in the first part of 1972. These will include a major critical work on current leftist theories by Jack Woddis. Entitled *New Theories of Revolution* it concentrates on the views of Debray, Fanon and Marcuse.

A new book by John Lewis, *The Marxism of Marx*, deals with questions about the "early" and "later" Marx, raised by such writers as Althusser, and presents a thought-provoking account of the conceptions of the unity of theory and practice at the heart of Marxism.

From Marx himself, the third part of his *Theories of Surplus Value* will be published very early in the new year. This will mean that all three parts of that work are now, for the first time ever, available in English translation.

In co-operation with Seven-Seas Books, Berlin, Lawrence and Wishart are publishing a paperback collection of writings from South Africa on *Apartheid*, edited by Alex La Guma; a collection of writings illustrating *The Radical Tradition of Education in England*, edited by Brian Simon; and a paperback edition of C. Desmond Greaves' *Life and Times of James Connolly*.

KARL MARX AND FREDERICK ENGELS: "IRELAND AND THE IRISH QUESTION"

Lawrence and Wishart wish to apologise to Angela Clifford and the Irish Communist Organisation for wrongfully claiming copyright for three items appearing in this collection. The translations by Angela Clifford of Frederick Engels' *History of Ireland, Notes for the History of Ireland* and *Notes for the Preface to a Collection of Irish Songs* were first published in 1965 by the Irish Communist Group in a pamphlet entitled *F. Engels: History of Ireland* and subsequently republished by the Irish Communist Organisation in 1965 and 1970.

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The 32nd Congress of the CPGB

Reuben Falber

Two days after the 32nd Congress of the Communist Party, I was asked during an interview in the BBC External Service, "What has the Communist Party achieved during its existence?" I hope in this review of the Congress to answer the question more fully than was possible in the few seconds at my disposal on the radio.

Tory Come-back and Communist Strategy

The danger of the come-back of the Tories had been foreseen by the 31st Congress in November 1969 when the resolution "Monopolies, Left Unity and the Communist Party" warned:

> "One of the chief crimes of the Labour Party right wing is that its policy is paving the way for a possible Tory come-back."

The response of the 31st Congress to this danger was—"The Communist Party will do all in its power to prevent this." At the 32nd Congress the theme of the resolution, "Unity, the Communist Party and the Struggle for Socialism" was the urgent necessity of building a mass movement with the strength and unity to force the Tories out and in the next General Election win a new Labour Government with Communist MPs, committed to left policies as the next stage in the struggle for socialist advance.

At the heart of this fight is the need to work for and develop the central strategy of winning the Labour Movement for militant left progressive policies, and rallying around it the numerous and varied anti-monopoly forces whose demands can be satisfied only by a programme of far-reaching change. The key to this strategy is the aim of turning the trade unions into militant fighting organisations of the working class campaigning for socialist policies, with a leadership reflecting the aspirations of the most progressive sections of the movement. The method to effect the change is the co-operation of all the forces of the left in developing, initiating and leading mass struggle on all issues, combining with the public work of the Communist Party, its campaigns, propaganda and election contests.

This strategy is proving successful in the many large and important unions which have been won for progressive policies, and in some, left leaders have been elected to important positions. The 1971 Trades Union Congress and Labour Party Conference both adopted progressive resolutions on most of the important issues of the day and overwhelmingly rejected support for Britian's application to join the Common Market. In addition, the left on the General Council of the TUC has gained added strength.

Both the Congress resolutions and John Gollan's report made clear that these are no more than the initial victories in the fight to change the Labour movement. Indeed, the advances themselves are threatened, and will continue to be threatened, so long as the right wing maintains its dominating position and grip on the machinery of the movement, with majorities in the Parliamentary Labour Party, the EC of the Labour Party and the General Council of the TUC. The progress made in the fight for left policies is now raising very sharply the need for a new leadership committed to socialist policies.

Common Market Battle and the Leadership Issue

The battle within the Labour movement around policies and leadership was brought to a head dramatically around the issue of the Common Market which reached its climax in the weeks preceding the Communist Congress. Following their overwhelming defeats at the Labour Party Conference and TUC, the pro-Marketeers, who all along had never concealed their intention of voting for entry whatever the movement might decide, pinned their hopes on securing a majority for entry in the Parliamentary Labour Party. From the earliest days of its existence the Parliamentary Party, under the domination of MacDonald, Snowden, Attlee, Morrison, and other right wingers, has asserted its independence from the mass movement, saying that while it would note the decisions of the Labour Party Conference and Executive Committee, it would not be bound by them.

The Parliamentary Party decided by 140 votes to 111 to oppose the Government in the Commons debate and the subsequent vote, and a three-line whip, the strongest instruction, was issued. A substantial group of pro-Market MPs led by the Deputy Leader, Roy Jenkins and the Chairman of the Parliamentary Party, Douglas Houghton, announced they would carry their defiance of the movement a stage further by voting contrary to the decisions of the Parliamentary Party as well as the highest policy making bodies in the movement, the Annual Conference and the Trades Union Congress. They took this step in the knowledge that the substantial group of Tory MPs voting against Heath

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meant that if Labour stood solid, the Government would fail to secure a majority for entry to the Market and the possibility of forcing its resignation and a new General Election would open up.

In the event, although 39 Tory MPs voted against it, Heath obtained a majority of 112, thanks to the votes of the 69 Labour PMs who went into the Lobby with the Government and the 20 others who abstained. Thus through the greatest act of betrayal since the sell-out by MacDonald, Thomas and Snowden in 1931, the government of mass unemployment, cold war, racialism and cuts in school milk was able to survive.

In the subsequent wave of anger which has swept the movement, a number of Constituency Labour Parties represented by the ignoble band of 89 are considering adopting new candidates. There are numerous reports of trade union branches and local parties passing votes of no confidence in their MPs and demanding withdrawal of support at the next General Election. In the elections for the leadership of the Parliamentary Party, the right wing incumbents held their positions by very narrow majorities —Jenkins, with 140 votes having a majority of only 14 over Michael Foot, and Douglas Houghton an even smaller majority, 7, over Norman Pentland.

Familiar though these events are, we have detailed them because of their wider significance. They have brought the struggle within the movement to a new and higher level and strengthened all the forces fighting for new policies and a progressive leadership. Equally important is the striking proof they offer of the correctness of the Communist Party's strategy and the contribution the Party has made to the Labour movement by its many years of unremitting struggle for it in face of many difficult and complex problems. As the Congress resolution, "The Common Market and European Security" shows, from the first day the Heath Government began to plot British entry to the EEC the Communist Party, which opposes entry in principle, said the issue must and would be decided by the British people.

Besides taking part in the broadly based campaigns nationally and locally, it made its own position on the Common Market known through hundreds of thousands of leaflets, tens of thousands of pamphlets and broadsheets and hundreds of meetings. In all its activity, the Communist Party stressed the key issue was to win the Labour movement to head the struggle against the Common Market outside Parliament as well as inside.

A great volume of grass roots activity was followed by conferences of the biggest and most important unions going on record against entry and the overwhelming "No" votes at the TUC and Labour Party Conference. It was these events which made up Wilson's mind, forced the majority of the leadership of the Parliamentary Party to come out against entry, and brought about the crisis within the leadership.

The battle on the issue of joining the Market is not yet over. Fresh opportunities for defeating the Government will be presented as legislation bringing British law into line with the Rome Treaty is presented to Parliament. Even more extra Parliamentary activity and pressure is needed in the months ahead to compel the Labour Party to make a united stand in Parliament against the Government and to win from the leadership a "pledge that the next Labour Government will take Britain out if the Tories take us in." (32nd Congress Resolution, "The Common Market and European Security").

End the Bans

Besides proving the correctness of the Communist Party's strategy, the present situation in the Labour movement shows it is an illusion "to think that left policies can be translated into action or become the programme of a future government unless the policy issues are matched with even more pressure to win changes in leadership and a much greater mass movement." (John Gollan's Report).

For the left progressive forces to achieve this, it is essential to end the remaining bans and proscriptions in the Labour movement. In the mid-1920's, Ramsay MacDonald and his colleagues on the right wing forced through a series of decisions banning Communists from being selected as Parliamentary or municipal candidates and holding individual membership of the local Labour Parties. These were followed by a ban on Communists representing their unions at the Annual Conference of the Labour Party or on local Labour Party committees.

The bans against Communists were the key to the right wing leaders' plans to turn the movement into an appendage of capitalism, supporting whatever policies best suited British imperialism in its efforts to win back its dominating position. Even then the right wing saw the small Communist Party as its principal obstacle. Later the bans were extended to Trades Councils, and some unions introduced similar bans.

Many of the bans have been lifted as a result of persistent united work by the left forces, notably in the biggest union, the Transport and General Workers Union. Some remain even in the unions: here the most important is that in the Electricians and Plumbers Trade Union. So, too, does the ban which prevents Communist trades unionists who pay the political levy from representing their unions at Labour Party conferences. This is a ban operating against trades unionists, restricting their right to decide who can best fight for their policies in the political wing of the movement. Its removal "would be a political step of historic importance and

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strengthen the left in the Labour Party." (John Gollan's Report).

Big Business in the Saddle

The need to strengthen the left is all the more urgent since the return at the last General Election of the Heath Government with its anti-working class, anti-democratic, cold war policies. More than any previous Tory Government, this government is openly representative of big business. Assuming office at a time when the post-war policies of British imperialism had proven bankrupt, it is gambling everything on getting into the Common Market. But the European Economic Community is not a mutual admiration society. Composed of the powerful and reactionary monopoly capitalist groups, it "is a closed block of the major West European imperialist powers. It has not ended the divisions between them, as was seen in the recent monetary crisis." (Resolution on the Common Market and European Security).

However much they may gang up against the working class, the national liberation movement and the socialist countries, the sharp antagonisms and rivalries among the member countries of the Common Market, as well as between the Six and the United States and Japan cannot be hidden. The economies of the Six are all affected by the downturn in world trade. Except for tiny Luxemberg, all are experiencing increasing unemployment and short time working. Nixon's measures to restore the ailing United States' economy are sharpening all the rivalries between the capitalist powers and deepen the monetary crisis.

The giant monopolies continue to grow, extending their activities in other countries, transferring whole branches of production abroad to capture markets, while causing unemployment in the country of their home base, juggling across frontiers the enormous funds at their disposal to obtain higher rates of interest. The Common Market is dominated by these firms, many of which are based in the United States.

To compete and live with the giants who are intent on crushing all rivals, the British capitalists and the Tory Government have launched the fiercest onslaught for many years against the working people. Unemployment, basically caused by the capitalist system, has been deliberately increased "to weaken the workers' bargaining position and achieve a huge surplus in the balance of payments in preparation for entry into the Common Market." (Emergency Resolution—"The Fight Against Unemployment".)

To weaken and divide the opponents of their vicious attacks on living standards, the social services and democratic rights, the Tories have forced through Parliament the Industrial Relations Act and the equally infamous Immigration Act. The issues posed by these policies were described by John Gollan:

> "The Tories and the capitalists cannot achieve their aims without making inroads into the organised power of the working class. Conversely, the working class cannot defend and advance its position without making inroads into the power of capitalism."

He added that for Communists there was only one response:—

> "We put forward the conception of a broad, democratic struggle for political power and socialism based on the unity of all the socialist forces, with far reaching political and social struggle, extra-Parliamentary as well as Parliamentary, isolating the forces of the Tories and big business, achieving a Socialist government of Labour and Communist Members of Parliament."

The Congress adopted a programme around which to rally the forces for this struggle. It included ending the domination of the big trusts through a new type of nationalisation, with measures of workers' control, democratic direction and a slashing of compensation; radical steps to overcome the crisis, establish the right to work through higher wages, salaries and pensions, with a programme of social services expansion; higher rates of tax on profits and big incomes, with a wealth tax of 3 per cent; a high rate of economic growth; the repeal of anti-democratic legislation and an extension of democracy; an all-European Security Conference for peace and economic co-operation in place of the cold war policies, entry to the Common Market and overseas military adventure.

Party Building

The character and scope of the political struggle needed to realise this programme poses sharply the need to end the stagnation in the size of the Party and Young Communist League membership and circulation of the *Morning Star*. It was around these questions that the sharpest debate developed in the course of both the pre-Congress discussion and in the Congress itself.

During the period of full employment when the right wing were still able to dictate policy as well as control the machine, it was understandable that there should be a feeling that Party growth would come only when the struggle sharpened, with a breaking of barriers between Communists and the rest of the Labour movement. This led to some tendencies to believe Party growth would be resumed automatically when the movement began to shift to the left, and there was an insufficient realisation that at each stage of the struggle new problems affecting the growth of the Party arise.

This led to some comrades questioning the Party's

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political positions. At the Congress there were amendments to the main resolution which, while not explicitly challenging the Party's policy and strategy, alleged there had been a weakening in respect to certain Marxist-Leninist positions. It was claimed the Party had weakened its position on international solidarity and adopted an over-critical attitude towards the Soviet Union; the Young Communist League was singled out for particular attack on this question. The Party's electoral position was described as "sectarian" and "leading to a neglect of our factory and industrial work and a lowering of our position in the mass movement." The *Morning Star* was criticised as needing "a much sharper polemical style" and for attempting to "imitate the capitalist dailies in coverage."

While the branches and comrades expressing these views are concerned about the building of the Party, their views are a caricature of the Party's political position and are based upon a completely distorted view of the Party's position in the Labour movement and the International Communist movement.

The proceedings of the Congress alone refuted the charge that the Party lacked internationalism. Congress received more than 50 messages, a record total, from fraternal parties and organisations engaged in struggle against imperialist aggression. They came from every part of the globe—Asia, Southern Africa, North Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, North America, Australasia, Eastern Europe, Western and Northern Europe. They came from the Socialist world, countries where armed struggle against imperialism is taking place, countries under fascist dictatorship. At the Congress there were representatives of Parties in the front line of the fight against imperialism: Ireland, Sudan, the United States, whose fraternal delegate made a moving appeal for an international campaign to release Angela Davis. There were representatives, too, from the liberation movements in Southern Africa and Bangla Desh.

The Party's Position

All the messages and speeches expressed warm appreciation of the British Communist Party's consistent fight against imperialism and its record of international solidarity. The Party's position was summed up by George Matthews in his reply to the discussion:

> "We support and defend the socialist world against imperialist attack . . . . we have never ceased to work for unity in the International Communist movement.
>
> "But it is a perversion of international solidarity to argue that it precludes public expression of disagreements with the policy of other parties where it is necessary.
>
> "It does no service to the socialist countries, nor to our Party, or to the cause of communism, to try to sweep the problems under the carpet. On the contrary, the more openly and resolutely they are faced, the sooner will they be solved, the more respect will the workers have for the Communist Parties and the more socialism will be strengthened on a world scale."

The arguments against the Party's electoral policy were effectively destroyed in the debate by speakers who showed the electoral and industrial work must go together. Congress was concerned at the low votes, but it recognised that the fight to establish the Party demanded it fight resolutely for a breakthrough on to the Councils and Parliament. The branches who had attempted to carry out our electoral policy had begun to come forward in their localities as leaders of struggle on important issues and were winning wide support and recognition.

In reply to the criticisms of the *Morning Star*, George Matthews said:

> "... the readers of a Communist newspaper are not people who are interested in politics in the narrowest most sectarian sense. Our readers are men and women and young people with the widest range of interests and activities, and they want their paper to reflect those interests within the limits that space and money allow."

The argument that sport was a political issue was reinforced in the last session of Congress when the fraternal delegate from the African National Congress in his speech paid tribute to the sports page of the *Morning Star* for its exposure of apartheid in sport.

The amendments were overwhelmingly defeated by votes of more than five to one, and the majority of delegates viewed the presentation in John Gollan's report to be more in accord with the realities of the situation. He said:

> "... the biggest single factor regarding our growth is the insufficient understanding of the role of the Communist Party in the British Labour Movement."

He went on to polemise against the ideas that

> "... the Labour Party is enough—or that left unity, with us as a ginger group is enough to get change—or that change can be brought about by the unions and the work of the left within the Labour Party."

He gave as three oustanding instances of the decisive influence exercised on events by the work of the Communist Party, the struggle against Carr's Act, the battle of the UCS workers for the right to work, and the campaign against the Common Market, and asked:

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> "Why can the Communist Party do this? Because, as distinct from the Labour Party and from other forces on the left, in the unions and Labour Party, we are a nationally organised, disciplined and democratic party. We operate across the boundaries of different industries, unions and movements. We have a consistent socialist ideology, we are a vanguard party, a party of struggle—a Party of Socialism."

Pinpointing what he considered the major weakness in the work to build the Party, he said:

> "... there has been insufficient attention in the mass struggle to a correct fight for the Party and its basic socialist outlook. If we could assist all the comrades leading the mass struggles to lead also this battle for a bigger party, we would start to make a break."

Northern Ireland

The Executive Committee placed before Congress an emergency resolution condemning the repression in Northern Ireland, the policy of internment and the brutal treatment of the detainees and prisoners. It described the repressive apparatus, sectarian methods and demagogy used by British imperialists for 50 years to maintain the partition of Ireland, the reactionary political system in the Six Counties which discriminates against the Catholic minority in jobs, housing, civil liberties and through gerrymandering the electoral system, deprives it of its due representation. Outlining a programme of political demands to right the injustices, including the introduction of proportional representation, the resolution called for the withdrawal of the British troops from the non-Unionist areas, the disarming of the right wing armed forces and an end to repressive acts against the democratic forces. Acts of violence by elitist anti-unionist forces which deepen sectarian divisions were condemned and a call made for united struggle by the working class in Britain and Ireland to secure the political measures which are needed to meet the aspirations of the overwhelming majority of the people of Ireland and lead to the withdrawal of the British administration.

A challenge to this resolution came in the form of an amendment which among other things called for the immediate beginning of a phased withdrawal of British troops. No doubt the movers of the amendment were activated by the fact that in almost every previous national liberation struggle the Communist Party of Great Britain has combined with the demand for self-government for the peoples of the colonies concerned, the immediate withdrawal of troops.

In replying to the discussion Jack Woddis pointed out that this demand ignored the special features of the situation in Ireland, the division of the country with a small truncated province in the north, the divisions among the people with the amount of support given to the reactionary Unionist Government by the Protestant majority, the existence of an armed sectarian based police force, the armed Ulster Defence regiment and the hundreds of thousands of guns in Northern Ireland, with the majority in the hands of Ulster extremists. In these circumstances the amendment relieved the British people of their responsibility for exerting pressure on the Heath Government to introduce a Bill of Rights and disarm the extremist groups. It would leave the Faulkner regime in power, armed with repressive and discriminatory legislation.

The issue was not whether the British troops should go, on this all were united that the sooner they went the better, but the creation of circumstances which would facilitate the advance of the progressive forces as well as get them out. An end to repression and democratic changes were required as well as the withdrawal of the troops, and the fight for the total policy had to be conducted.

In the event, only 62 delegates voted for the amendment, which was thus defeated by an overwhelming majority.

In a thoughtful and inspiring speech, James Stewart, the Assistant Secretary of the Communist Party of Ireland, reinforced the correctness of the policy adopted at the Congress. Describing the effects on the people of Northern Ireland of the policies of the Heath and Stormont Governments, he told the Congress of the heroic fight of the Irish Communists in unity with the other democratic and progressive forces to defend the people. He, too, rejected bombings by elitist groups as endangering civilian lives, deepening divisions and giving Heath and Faulkner excuses for violence against the progressive forces. After thanking the British Communist Party and the *Morning Star* for their assistance in this struggle, he outlined the four immediate demands of the Communists in Ireland—release the internees; withdraw the troops from working class areas and end their repressive role; end the Special Powers Act and the enactment of a Bill of Rights by Westminster over the heads of the Unionist administration to establish democracy in Northern Ireland.

Women in Society

Through the report, discussion and resolution on "Women in Society" the Congress came to grips with the new problems arising from the developing movement challenging social attitudes and policies which relegate women to an inferior status.

The far-reaching technological developments during and since the Second World War have in practice brought about very considerable changes in the contribution women are making towards society. Women are to an increasing extent being drawn into social production and many more are

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seizing the opportunity of higher education and achieving academic distinction. The advance in the knowledge and use of contraception has also contributed to women's potential social role. All of these developments conflict sharply with the economic, legal and social discriminations against women and the concept that their only or main place is in the home.

Women are having to bear the full weight of Tory policies. The lower percentage of registered unemployment among women conceals the tens of thousands who because they are not entitled to unemployment benefit, do not register. Most of the gap between the official and real totals of unemployed are accounted for by married women with no right to benefit. Housewives are the main sufferers from Tory policies inflating prices, rents and other living costs, and the cuts in the social services, too, add to the difficulties of working class women.

Women are increasingly taking part in the big social movements of the day. In industry this is reflected in the campaign for equal pay, the participation of women in strike struggles and some experiences of wives giving militant support to their husbands on strike. In the various movements against Tory social policies, especially the cuts in school milk and the increased cost of school meals, women have played a very prominent part as organisers and leaders. In the course of these activities many more women are beginning to look beyond the immediate issues and see the need to challenge the structure of a society which can subject them to so many discriminations and indignities.

The resolution recognised the contribution of the Women's Liberation Movement to the forces challenging current social attitudes and policies towards women. It, however, criticised the tendency to pose the question as one of women versus men and dismiss the Labour movement as male dominated. This approach, Rosemary Small argued in moving the resolution, was wrong in principle and divisive. The roots of women's inequalities lie in the division of society into classes and the prejudices and concepts of male superiority instilled by the ruling classes to divide and weaken the exploited classes. Although great barriers to full equality remain, united struggle has secured a number of important advances. Further progress towards women playing a full and equal part in society requires winning the Labour movement for correct attitudes and policies on all the questions involved. But to win women for an understanding that they need to fight in and with the Labour movement to secure democratic advances, men and women have the responsibility for working to eradicate wrong attitudes in the movement towards this question and to create conditions which give women wider possibilities to undertake responsibility in all sections and at all levels of the movement.

The resolution incorporated a programme of economic, social and political demands which will give millions of women a better life and improve conditions for their families, as the basis for attracting women and drawing them into the united fight with men around the leadership of the Labour movement. It instructed the new Executive Committee to take immediate steps to overcome the political and other weaknesses which have held back the Party's fight for women's needs and our work among women.

From its foundation the Communist Party has recognised the special position of women in society—this has always formed a part of Marxist thought—and initiated special measures to win the support of women and organise them. In doing so it has consistently maintained that the conditions for full equality of women can be provided only in a socialist society. Although experience in the socialist world proves that old attitudes do not automatically disappear with socialist change, nevertheless in the socialist countries women have made great progress in equal pay, equal opportunities in education and jobs in industry and the professions along with a great advance in the facilities to enable them, particularly those with children, to play their part in social production. If socialism is to be built in Britain, women and especially working women, must be won to battle against monopoly capitalism. The responsibility for bringing them into the movement for socialist change lies with both men and women.

What Have We Achieved

I return now to the question: "What has the Communist Party achieved?"

The Communist Party was founded to lead the fight for a socialist Britain. Is the measuring rod to be whether or not the aim of the Party has been reached? By that standard, the Labour Party which aims at the common ownership of the means of production and distribution has achieved nothing.

The socialist revolution is not and cannot be the outcome of a single act. It is a process which involves a long, hard struggle to build the political force capable of wresting power from capitalism and building the new socialist society. This force is described in *The British Road to Socialism* as:

> "...a broad popular alliance around the leadership of the working class, fighting every aspect of the policies of the monopolies; to develop a wide movement for peace, democracy and improvement of living standards, and for a democratic programme that leads in the direction of socialism." (p. 28)

To see what the Communist Party has achieved in

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this direction one has only to look at the great variety of forces waging varied forms of struggle against the policies of monopoly capitalism. They embrace not only the key and decisive sections of the industrial workers but large and growing numbers of professional workers and other sections of the middle strata. Teachers, local government workers, and other groups of "white collar workers" have come into action to defend their standards and in doing so quickly realised their allies are the working class, and the need for them to associate with the Labour movement, hence the affiliation to the TUC of many unions catering for white collar workers.

On social questions, housewives, mothers, tenants, conservationists and broad strata of people concerned with social problems are involved in activities against the cuts in social expenditure and the anti-social consequences of Tory policies which promote the interests of monopoly capitalism. The students, too, have in their struggle to protect their interests, not only begun to associate with the Labour movement, but in common with other sections of youth, are to an increasing extent challenging society. Then there are the very important developments already referred to, bringing more and more women into action.

The broad alliance is in process of being built. Its already considerable scope has been the result of patient, united work by Communists and others on the left. The next step, while strengthening the movement by bringing into it fresh forces, is the need to give it a more socialist direction.

This brings us back to the question of a stronger Communist Party and bigger circulation of the *Morning Star*.

The existence of the *Morning Star* itself is one of the major achievements of the Communist Party. The Labour Party, with its huge resources, was not able to sustain a daily paper. The old *Daily Herald* went first into joint ownership with a capitalist press baron, then under complete capitalist control and finally out of existence. The *Daily Worker* and its successor, the *Morning Star*, survived in face of obstacles which destroyed papers possessing many times more resources because it had the one priceless asset the others did not and could not possess, a loyal band of thousands of readers and supporters who understand the working class and progressive movement needs a paper to fight for it every day and who are prepared to make incredible sacrifices to maintain it.

Nor should anybody underestimate what has been involved in building the Communist Party, with its more than 28,000 members and nearly 1,000 local and factory branches. Building a revolutionary party in a country with Britain's imperialist history and strongly entrenched reformist leadership and ideology in the Labour movement is an enormously difficult task. It is made more difficult by the undemocratic electoral system which places great difficulties in the way of newer parties seeking electoral representation.

A revolutionary party has to be built in the course of the struggle. Its existing and potential members and supporters are subjected to great pressure from capitalist society; some suffer and others have reason to fear economic or social victimisation. In the ebb and flow of the class battle inevitably the working class suffers some setbacks affecting the morale of some of its more advanced and militant members.

Every Communist knows the Party will always face problems. To be a Communist will never be easy. Nobody is more conscious of the Party's limitations than those who are proud to hold membership of it, and strive ceaselessly to build it.

But the Party not only exists: it is playing an increasing part in British politics and particularly in the politics of the force which is decisive for social change—the Labour movement.

The truth of this was shown at the Congress not only in the resolutions and debates, but in the composition of the Congress itself. Of the 422 delegates, 250 are employed in the main industries. Of these, 78 are engaged in engineering, motors, shipbuilding and other metal trades, 41 in building and 38 in transport. 74 delegates came from the professions and white collar sections, including 26 teachers and a further 15 delegates were students. 50 trade unions were represented among the delegates.

It was the youngest Congress for many years. 16 per cent of the delegates were under 25 years of age compared with 12 per cent at the 31st Congress, and 9 per cent at each of the three previous Congresses. 14 per cent of the delegates had been in the Party less than two years, a tribute to the readiness of branches to promote new, young comrades and provide them with experience in making Party policy. At the same time it was a Congress with a considerable weight of Marxist education, nearly one-third of the delegates having been to national Party Schools, and more than one half had attended District Schools.

The Congress concluded in an atmosphere of confidence arising from the conviction among delegates that armed with a policy which corresponds to the needs of the working people at a time of Tory blitzkreig on their working conditions, a strategy for socialist advance which life has demonstrated to be correct and the socialist perspective of *The British Road to Socialism*, the Party will in the coming days and months strengthen its ranks and play a still greater part in strengthening the anti-monopoly forces and give them a socialist direction.

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Priests and Socialism in Chile*

Maruja Echegoyen

Eighty Catholic priests who live and work among the working classes in Chile met in April in Santiago to study the most effective way priests and lay people could help in building socialism in Chile. What follows is a summary made up from answers given to questions asked at a Press Conference on April 16, to some questions asked later of some of the priests taking part, and from statements made in some of the papers read.

It has been compiled by the Uruguayan journalist MARUJA ECHEGOYEN.[1]

Background

During the final Session of the study group, eight priests held a Press Conference at which they read out a prepared statement and answered questions from journalists representing both Chilean and overseas papers. Among these priests were Fr Gonzalo Arroyo, chaplain of the Catholic University of Santiago, and Fr Alfonso Pujadas, Director-General of the Workers' Movement at the same University. The journalists mostly represented left-wing organs. Not long before, the Christian Democrat daily *La Prensa* had published, tendentiously and without prior authorisation, with misleading headings, a *private* document circulated in November last year among a group of priests, wrongly making it out to be the starting-point for this meeting of Socialist priests. Gonzalo Arroyo attacked this action at the Press Conference, and it is indeed one more example of the growing inability of the more right-wing sector of Christian Democracy in Chile to listen and discuss rationally.

* * *

Questions and Answers

Are you holding this study group in defiance of the hierarchy, or with the support of the bishops?

There is no question of defiance. We are still Catholic priests. We invited the bishops and some would have been here were it not for the fact that the Episcopal Conference is meeting at the same time elsewhere. The Vicar of the Southern Zone has taken part in all our meetings.

We are told that more than half those taking part are not Chilean. Is that true?

Another distortion—though if it were true, it would merely indicate that foreign priests have a better sense of socio-political realities and how to serve the people in the world today than Chilean ones! The proportion of foreigners amongst us is the same as in the rest of the clergy in Chile. This high proportion—nearly half—is explained by the crisis of vocations in Chile. But what matters is that a priest should be with the working classes, not his passport. Faith overflows the narrow boundaries of nationalism. Che Guevara, an Argentinian, did quite right to fight in Cuba, and the same can be said with much more truth of Christians. Some of our foreign companions have worked in the greatest poverty for twenty years on behalf of the Chilean people.

As for me (added Alfonso Pujadas), I came to Chile to do in the open spaces here what could not be done, what had failed, in the pressure cooker of my native Catalonia.

Why do you have to throw yourselves into politics: shouldn't a priest remain neutral in these matters?

Such neutrality is a fallacy; it never existed. The Church and priests have always had *different forms* of political involvement. Those who talk about "neutrality" and "a-politicism" are those who, sometimes without realising it, serve the *status quo*, that is, an unjust capitalist society that through its own structures continues to make the rich richer and the poor poorer, which is a scandalously anti-Christian thing to do. The Cardinal of Santiago was quite right when he said, in November 1970: "There are more evangelical values in socialism than in capitalism".

But you are causing scandal and division among Christians. Couldn't you choose less shocking ways of expressing your political choice?

We are not causing any scandal among the poor, or among those who think for themselves and see that socialism would allow the world to free men from slavery so as to fulfil themselves in fuller, freer and more evangelical ways. As for divisions, there is a much more scandalous one provoked among the working classes by certain Christian policies that have taken the strength and unity out of the popular movement and have sown unjustfied suspicions by their melodramatic anti-Communism

[1] Translated from the Spanish by Paul Burns.

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that has no roots in our social reality in this country. We are working as priests for the unity of the whole country, and it is our permanent contact with its people, our faithfulness to the workers, that makes us take political responsibilities. We don't use the word "political" in a party political sense, but in the sense of a contribution to the building up of the society of men (*Polis* means "city"). Don't forget that for the Christian there is no *one* ideal model of society in practice. His model only exists on a transcendental level and he can work in any sort of society that does not deny human fellowship. Socialism achieves this better than capitalism, and the facts are there to prove it.

To what do you attribute the failure of Christian Democracy, which also preached fellowship?

To a mistaken strategy based on an unscientific analysis of reality and a pre-Conciliar theology with no roots in the world of today. Christian Democracy was an imported product; it had nothing to do with the reality of life in Latin America. It is understandable in Europe, where the Catholic Church had withdrawn into a sort of ghetto, as a result of the political persecution and philosophical attacks it has suffered over the last three hundred years. In Europe, Christian Democracy was an interesting attempt to escape from the ghetto, but when it was transplanted to Latin America, no account was taken of the fact that here the Catholic Church was tied to the established order, and was playing an enormous part in politics, as it always had done, directly or indirectly. The problem here was the opposite to the one in Europe. It was not one of trying to bring the Church out of the ghetto, but of freeing it from its historical links with an increasingly unjust and oppressive society. Christian Democracy failed also because it was tied to a pre-Conciliar theology, one which emphasised the dualism between the Church and the World, put forward a Christian model of society that bore no relationship to the historical reality of Christianity, and based itself on totally abstract criteria, with no relevance to the facts of history, let alone of Latin American history. This European-style social Catholicism had no chance of being a successful alternative to socialism: even without its internal divisions and before it outlasted its historical role, it lacked adequate theoretical bases, the means to make an adequate analysis of the social reality from which to work out criteria for action.

* * *

Summary of a Discussion

One of the priests present would not accept that Christian Democracy had failed. It had, he maintained, been a positive and necessary step, and had performed an invaluable task in awakening the people—which Tomic had done—to the fact that there was no opposition between Catholicism and revolution.

(What the right wing in Chile ardently reproach Tomic with is precisely having been grist to Allende's mill. They don't ask why the Chilean people preferred Allende's Popular Union Party to Tomic's socialist version of Christian Democracy when both offered almost equally revolutionary solutions.)

It is quite true, the socialist priests went on, that we had two revolutionary ways offered: Allende's and Tomic's. One of them won, and so we work with it. The Christian has no other choice. Everyone must of course decide this for himself, but let him do so as a result of a historical, socio-economic, scientific analysis, not on the basis of taboos or romantic ideals and outworn formulas that go no way towards meeting the basic problems our people suffer from.

* * *

Further Questions and Answers

How can you reconcile the class struggle with Christian charity?

That's a false opposition, a play on words. What does Christian charity mean as practised by a capitalist society that exploits the riches of Latin America at the cost of 45 out of every 100 children born in the Continent dying before the age of five? What does Christian charity mean for officially Catholic governments which at this very moment are torturing mothers, priests, students and workers, sometimes to death, or just shooting them down in the streets? The class struggle is a *fact*. To deny it by invoking Christian charity is hiding one's head in the sand. But one has to make a very clear distinction between the class struggle as a fact and the use one can make of the energy of the struggle precisely in order to overcome injustice, exploitation, killings, illiteracy—all the evils of under-development—so as finally to do away with the class struggle as unnecessary.

Here one must realise and fully understand that capitalism, by its very nature and dynamism, inevitably—not because capitalists are evil men—hence the fallacy of trying to convert them to Christianity and Christian charity—inevitably produces under-development, determines that the rich nations get richer all the time and the poor ones poorer all the time. These are not Swedish, Chinese or socialist theories; they are economic facts; and history and statistics bear them out time and again. This brutal fact of inequality will not be corrected on the level of personal intentions; we have to act on the level of the structures that produce inequality between classes. This action on structures is the class struggle. It doesn't even always need physical violence. The nationalisation

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of the copper mines and the banks in Chile are two good examples of the class struggle in action, and not only do they not run counter to the Gospel, but at this juncture of under-development and the oppression of the poor majority by a rich minority, they are the only thing that can be asked in the name of Christian charity.

But this class struggle means using hatred, fomenting it.

Not necessarily. The class struggle in Marxist terms is not an orgy of violence in which everyone releases his aggressive instincts and pent-up resentments. It is rational, controlled aggression. And hatred is not its only motive force, nor even the most effective one in the long run: Ghandi, Martin Luther King and Dom Helder Camara have undertaken effective struggles without condoning hatred as a motivation. And if a Christian is shocked at the thought of spilling blood, there are other techniques of class struggle, as there are of modern war—economic, psychological, diplomatic. What is not admissible is passivity or neutrality in the name of charity!

Nevertheless, an armed struggle is inevitable because no privileged class ever gave up its privileges except through force. Would you do what Camilo Torres did and preach an armed struggle to bring the people to power, with a machine-gun?

That is a personal choice that depends on the historical moment in which each person finds himself. One always has to choose the lesser of two evils. As Christians, we cannot accept the violence of those over us (institutional violence, the capitalist violence that has produced two World Wars in 30 years and 50 colonial or civil wars) out of fear of using defensive violence to protect the majority against armed exploitation by the minority. The Church has never condemned the use of force in self-defence, and what the people who are saying "Enough" and resorting to an armed struggle are doing is defending themselves. Camilo Torres represents the final political choice open to a priest. He is the example for those who, in particular historical circumstances, come to the conclusion that they have to resort to revolutionary struggle because it is the *only* way left if "the love that men should bear their neighbour is to be made real". One should not forget that Camilo did not give up his priesthood; he made his choice as a priest, a priest who proclaims at Communion that it is the blood of the lamb, the Paschal sacrifice, that redeems the people from their sins and frees them from slavery—and who is to say that he did wrong?

You use a transcendental language, the language of Christian faith. . . . Isn't this perhaps incompatible with the atheism and materialism of Marxists?

Let's be quite clear what we mean by these terms. There is a lot of unwitting confusion—and a lot of wilful confusion. *Historical Materialism* is a theory about the conditions for achieving liberty in the course of history. It does not say that materialism determines the act of liberation, but that it conditions it. Theologically, we would say that historical materialism deals with the "works" that enliven faith: "Not everyone who says "Lord, Lord" will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does my commandments". He who *does*. Doing, in a world where the survival of humanity depends on the economic process, means *doing* also on the level of the social relationships of production. All this can be translated line for line into the categories of scholastic theology. As for *Dialectical Materialism*, it is a more complex case, but it can be said that its more ingenuous and primitive forms (those condemned by the encyclicals, which are incompatible with Christian thinking and belong to a particular epoch in certain socialist countries—to Stalinism, in fact) have been completely superseded by the more important Marxist philosophers. Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, Marcuse, and many others, bring all that has been worked out in the first half of the twentieth century into their thinking and are way beyond the materialism-*vs*-spirituality conflict, which belongs to the late nineteenth century.

But what about atheism?

Marx's atheism was practical, not theoretical. He was not interested in the proofs for the existence of God, and he did not talk of armed struggle against religion. He was concerned with the social effects of belief in God, the fact that religion acted as a sedative for the deep evil of economic oppression. There is no point in attacking the drug; only the illness. The fight against religion in the Soviet Union owes more to the Russian tradition of atheism than to Marx. Insofar as the building of socialism in Chile is true to our own history, that should not happen here. It is noticeable that the young people of Latin America have spontaneously by-passed that stage: they are interested in building a Latin-American society in which freedom has real meaning. Trying to fit everyone into one mould of thought is a hindrance rather than a help to their effective sharing in goods and decisions. This makes doctrinal pluralism possible. Marxists themselves in practice are revising their attitude to religion and are progressively more unwilling to discuss their global view of life. The materialist challenge to faith is really stronger in the advanced industrial nations, with their clinging to material comfort, their passion for accumulating consumer goods and their refusal to ask themselves the meaning of life in case the answer should threaten their privileges. The upper and middle Chilean classes who emigrate to the United States and Europe from fear of their being brought up in "Marxist materialism", when

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the result will be that they will then be brought up in the "materialism of luxury, competition and consumption" are failing in critical acumen, to say the least.

There is still one problem. If Christians are converted to Marxism, what specifically Christian contribution can they make to the building up of socialism?

There is no such "conversion" to Marxism, just as one cannot talk either of conversion from Catholicism to Aristotelianism, or Scholasticism, or Existentialism. Marxism is not a religion—even if Communism today absorbs the religious energies of millions of people. Marxism is tending to evolve into a social science, and as an instrument of analysis and a method of action, its materialism is not incompatible with the Christian faith. Marxists and Christians have reached the same conclusions about the Chilean situation, and both of us are asking how we find a way out. As Christians, we bring very deep-rooted and dynamic motivations to this quest: those of Faith, Hope and Charity. Faith? Our Faith is not something in the air; it has always been an incarnate faith, an historical one. For this reason it implies political involvement. It cannot be separated from human progress, and the priestly function is indissolubly linked to the awakening of human awareness. Hope? Our hope may refer to the Kingdom, to the second coming of Christ, but it begins to act here and now, in temporal structures, because looking forward to the future life begins here and now, in this society in which I happen to live and for whose transformation—humanisation—I am inescapably responsible. Charity? Loving one's neighbour, which is the first commandment by definition, today means working to change the structures that are destroying my neighbour, the people, the poor. *Service*, the priest's, and the Christian's, first mission, today means mobilising the people, helping to form their consciousness of themselves as a class. Socialism, because of its courageous, positive values and because it works for class solidarity and freedom from economic slavery, from ignorance and illness, from poverty and cultural slavery, is for us the partial realisation of the Kingdom of God on earth. And we denounce capitalism because its implacable structures remove all possibility of beginning to bring about the Kingdom of God on earth for the vast majority of the human race. Christian faith incarnate in works, in social, political, economic and revolutionary action, this coincides with the faith of socialism. Both tend towards the creation of a classless society, towards solidarity. They are two Utopias (in the technical sense of the word) that back each other up. On this Utopian level, the Christian contribution seems to me important because of its dynamism, its specific nature and its universality.

The other specifically Christian contribution can be in the field of morals—as long as we put our moral theology in order first. The classical Marxists did not draw up moral treatises. Lenin was occupied above all by political strategy; his morality accentuates the political dimension and leaves personal morality undeveloped. And even as political morality, it is war morality, in that it refers to a particular historical moment when the classes are in open, ceaseless conflict. But in a socialist society that overcomes the conflict between bourgeois and proletarian, other forms of morality will apply. Socialism is a continual process, a continual growth and transformation: as it goes on, successive contributions will go on completing and enriching man's moral dimension. We think Christians have something to say here, above all through their *behaviour in practice*.

What do you regard as the worst obstacles Christians and Marxists will meet in their efforts to build socialism?

Apart from capitalism—the common enemy, which must be fought without quarter or hope of reconciliation till the final change is brought about—the worst obstacles for a time will be our mutual prejudices. Christians have a distorted view of Marxism. We tend to believe that it inevitably means violence, dictatorship, militant atheism, failing to see that violence, dictatorship and practical and hypocritical atheism have always been with us, under one name or another. We attribute to the essence of Marxism what are only the external connotations of the first steps in the formation of some socialist States, and foreign steps that need not be repeated in our countries provided we are faithful to the concept of Marxism as an instrument for changing a given reality, in this case our own reality, which is different from that of Europe or Asia. Marxists, for their part, tend to confuse Christianity with some of its transitory historical forms—and usually the worst, not the more constructive ones—with fascism or the right-wing clericalism that compromises with colonialism or totalitarianism to protect the Church as an Institution.

But both Christians and Marxists are currently going through a process of honest, critical revision of our ideas, prejudices, attitudes and "hang-ups" with regard to each other. Dialogue may not be easy, but it is possible and real, and an established fact. In practice, we are all (except for a few fanatics dominated by fear of change) agreed on the essential task: the problems of the hungry—hungry for bread, a roof, health, freedom, knowledge, brotherhood, dignity—is not solved by offering them an exhortation, or a flag or a philosophical doctrine, but by obtaining the *actual means* of satisfying

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their hunger. Freedom and what goes with it, is not asked for or given; it is *won*. This is what socialism is for us, and this is why we are with the Chilean people in the political mission they have chosen—to build not a European-style Christian Democracy but a Chilean socialism.

The European Common Market[1,2] (Part 2)

Phil Leeson

The effects on Britain's trade and balance of payments of a decision to join the EEC depend on (amongst others) the following factors:—

(a) The direct impact of the mutual abolition of tariffs in creating trade between Britain and the Six and in diverting trade from the outside world.

(b) The extent to which "non-tariff barriers" to trade, and other taxes, especially excise duties, which affect trade are reduced or harmonised in the enlarged EEC.

(c) The sharing with EEC producers of our present preferential trading arrangements with Ireland, Norway, Denmark and those members of the Commonwealth who are able and willing to become Associate Members.

(d) The loss of preferences in the rest of EFTA and their loss of preference in the UK market.

(e) The comparable loss of preference between UK and those members of the Commonwealth who cannot or will not associate.

(f) The effect on our trade with the outside world of the adoption of the EEC common external tariff by us instead of our present one (which is on the average higher), and of adopting the Common Agricultural Policy.

(g) The effect of adopting the EEC Global Preference Scheme for underdeveloped countries' manufactured exports instead of our own scheme—and of adopting other modifications to trade as dictated by the Common Commercial Policy.

(h) Whether or not any further attempts are made through GATT to reduce general world tariff levels and hence negate the effect of joining.

(i) The possibility that our balance of payments and new focus of trade might dictate a reduction in aid to underdeveloped countries and hence affect their purchases from us.

(j) The cost to the balance of payments of higher prices for imported food from EEC Countries.

(k) Any loss of competitiveness which might result from higher wage-costs arising from higher food prices.

(l) The reduction in consumption of food and the stimulus to home production of food which higher prices might bring, thus reducing the volume of imports.

(m) The balance of payments cost of our contribution to the EEC budget.

(n) The effect of the freeing of capital movements and the running down of the sterling balances.

(o) The extent to which progress is made towards Economic and Monetary Union with its implication for the right to use devaluation to correct inbalances.

(p) The impact of joining on trade in banking, insurance, tourism, shipping etc.

(q) The "dynamic effects" which the change in the trading environment may have on British industry.

(r) Any changes that may occur as a result of membership in enabling UK to get aid in times of deficit from EEC Countries instead of, as previously, through IMF channels.

(s) Any benefits that may arise as a result of the UK negotiating with the outside world as a member of the EEC bloc instead of by herself.

(t) Any general impact on world trading relationships of the accession of the UK e.g. intensification of the current trade war with America.

It should be remembered that effects on the balance of payments are not the same thing as effects on living standards or on economic growth, though they may be inter-connected. Further, general figures for the economy tell us very little about the

[1] Part I appeared in the October 1971 issue.

[2] Throughout this article the phraseology suggests that UK will in fact join the EEC. I hope that this might be prevented but it would be pedantic to keep on saying so.

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effects on different sections of the population, different industries, different regions etc. A broad distinction has been drawn in recent discussion between the "Impact Effects" of joining—the direct results of tariff and agricultural support changes—and the "Dynamic Effects" arising from longer-run more fundamental changes. It will be clear however that such a division is very artificial in practice. "Immediate Effects" may take several years to work through and they affect the nature of longer-run changes. No-one has succeeded in making any precise estimates of the effects of joining as a whole, nor would that be possible. Attempts have however been made to measure the more direct of the effects on manufacturing and the food trade.[3]

Manufacturing Trade

The general picture is that we can hardly hope for any very great increase in trade as a result of tariff changes. The present levels are low, and our trade with EEC has been increasing quite rapidly in spite of them. In 1958 14 per cent of UK total exports (85 per cent of which are manufactures) went to EEC. This rose to 22 per cent by 1970, a far greater rate of increase than that of our trade with the rest of the world. Kaldor[4] looking at UK engineering goods sales in the 1960's says that of our loss of share in world markets the greater part was in the domestic market, in the face of foreign competition, and in distant overseas markets (where Japanese competition was strong). We did better in competition with EEC producers in the EEC market than we did in neutral markets. Major, Hays and Grunberger[5] say that comparing trends in our share of total world exports to the EEC with trends in our share of world exports as a whole, we have done less badly in EEC countries since EEC was formed than previously.

Although tariffs are low the present UK levels are higher than the EEC levels. When Kennedy Round adjustments are complete in 1972 the arithmetical averages will be 10.2 per cent for the UK and 7.6 per cent for the EEC. The picture is complicated by the fact that the averages conceal wide variations in tariffs on individual items. Also "nominal rates" may not be the same as "effective rates" (which depend on whether or not an industry uses inputs which are themselves subject to tariffs). Excise duties can also act as a protective device, as can many "non-tariff barriers", (referred to in Part I of this article).

But assuming that the only changes during the first years after entry are in tariff levels the general inference is that EEC exporters have more to gain by virtue of tariff reductions than we have. We shall also be unilaterally presenting a lower average tariff to the outside world than at present.

Supporters of entry have clearly written the Commonwealth off as a trading partner (see the 1971 White Paper[6] para. 37). The share of our exports going to the Commonwealth fell from 38 per cent in 1958 to 23 per cent in 1968 and in 1970 was actually less than the share going to EEC. As world tariff levels have come down the importance of Commonwealth Preferences has dwindled. Commonwealth countries are (perforce) trading more with other partners and are even reaching agreements with EEC with or without our entry. Our share of world manufacturing exports to the Overseas Sterling Area fell from 48.7 per cent in 1959 to 27. 8 per cent in 1969. The argument goes that we must join the bonanza in trade between industrial countries, and we have little to gain by partnership with impoverished ex-colonies. So far as trade with EFTA is concerned supporters of entry argue that there will be no tariffs against us in the case of Norway and Denmark, that other members may establish free trade with EEC, and that even if they don't the eventual tariffs will not be high.

Commonwealth Trade

Nevertheless the Commonwealth is still a very large market and entry into EEC will affect our trade both because of the erection of tariff barriers between us and those members left outside, and because of the reduction in food imports caused by the CAP, and the sharing of preferences with EEC in the case of those who join. The same applies to EFTA. Even if they join we have to share our preferences with EEC exporters. EFTA is not such a large market as the Commonwealth but our share of world exports to it has been well maintained by the free trade arrangements between its members, (we exported 11.9 per cent of the world's total of manufactures to EFTA in 1959 and 11.1 per cent in 1969), and this position is threatened.

Of the various estimates of the effect of joining on industrial trade, the 1970 White Paper[7] calculated that exports would fall below and imports rise above the levels that they would have otherwise attained to

[3] Two very useful articles summarising recent work on the Common Market appear in the *National Institute Economic Review* August 1971. They are: "Entry into the EEC: A comment on some of the economic issues", and (by Marcus Miller) "Estimates of the static balance of payments and welfare costs of United Kingdom entry into the Common Market".

[4] N. Kaldor, "The truth about the Dynamic Effects", *New Statesman* 12-3-71.

[5] R. L. Major, S. Hays and A. Grunberger, "Another look at the Common Market", *National Institute Economic Review* November 1970.

[6] "The United Kingdom and the European Communities" Cmnd 4715, July 1971.

[7] "Britain and the European Communities", Cmnd 4289, February 1970.

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give a possible range of payments losses on this account of between £125m. and £275m. a year. This. estimate was accepted by Kaldor. Other estimates have been more optimistic. Williamson[8] calculated that EEC exports to us would rise by more than UK exports to them, but that Commonwealth and EFTA exports to us would fall by more than UK exports to them, thus leaving the trade balance more or less unaffected. Later he corrected this somewhat to produce an estimated loss *in toto* of £100m. per year.[9] The 1971 White Paper modestly abstained from making any estimate at all. "The Government do not believe that the overall response of British industry can be quantified in terms of its effect on the balance of trade". (para 45).

These estimates are of necessity very crude and can only take into account the more obvious factors. As other factors are included the estimates change. For instance Dosser[10] is reported as calculating that the adoption of VAT will encourage exports to the extent of £70-80m. a year. Some estimates (e.g. Kaldor and the 1970 White Paper) assume that wage costs will rise as food prices rise. Others assume that this will not happen, or that devaluation will correct for its effect. The 1971 White Paper (para. 43) dismisses the notion of rising wage costs partly because lower tariffs on industrial goods will help to offset higher food prices and partly, no doubt, because they intend to direct their efforts to preventing wage increases.

Food Trade

The adoption over the transitional period of the Common Agricultural Policy in place of the present British system of deficiency payments to farmers will mean a rise in wholesale and retail food prices, with levies charged on food imports from the outside world to render them uncompetitive except in times of local shortage, and the importation of highly priced food from Europe. The 1970 White Paper estimated a rise in food prices of between 18 per cent and 26 per cent over the transition as a result. The 1971 White Paper speaks of 16 per cent over six years. The main difference pointed to is the rise in world food prices towards EEC levels between 1969 and 1971. Kaldor[11] claims that the narrowing of EEC—World price differentials does not justify such a large revision and that the government must have subtracted the price rise which will be caused by the levies already imposed in partial revision of the old system, in advance of membership. (He also asserts that entry will enforce devaluation thus causing a further rise in food prices. The total rise because of entry would be over 30 per cent not 16 per cent).

The main criticism however is that there is no warrant for the assertion that the recent world price rises will be permanent. The Government have claimed that over and above the effects of the recent poor harvests there has been a trend towards a narrowing of the EEC—World price gap over recent years which will continue. Others doubt this on the basis of likely changes in world food productivity and the political power of EEC farmers in obtaining higher prices (Press reports on 11-11-1971 speak of claims by Farmers' Organisations for rises of 11-12 per cent in comparison with the Commission's recommended 2-3 per cent). The Government presumably base their estimate of retail prices on expected changes in wholesale prices. But this is not very reliable. Retail prices vary considerably in the various parts of the EEC—from (last year) 20 per cent more than UK, to 80 per cent more.

For balance of payments purposes the question is whether the higher food prices will (a) cause consumers to eat less, (the 1970 White Paper assumed that this would be so, but the 1971 White Paper is more coy), and (b) induce farmers to produce more. Part of the receipts from higher prices will simply replace the loss to farmers of the present government subsidies and part will have to pay for dearer feeding stuffs. But both White Papers and other estimates assume a rise in home production. Thus depending on the assumptions made we get a wide range of estimates of balance of payments effects of the changes in food trade. The 1970 White Paper estimated a range from a drain of £255m. a year to a gain of £85m. Kaldor assumes a drain of £200m. The 1971 White Paper assumes a drain of £50m. Other estimates are more optimistic and speak of gains ranging from £150m. to £200m.[12]

The Budget Contributions

Only in 1978 will the existing Six start paying completely for their common budget according to the self-financing system agreed in 1970 i.e. the payment of 90 per cent of the receipts from farm levies and customs duties plus the product of a VAT at a rate of up to 1 per cent as needed. No-one knows by how much the cost of the budget will rise. The main component is the cost under CAP of farm modernisation, export subsidies, and purchases of farm surpluses. If world food prices rise further then the costs of CAP will not rise as much and our payments of levies and VAT receipts will be less. The

[8] J. Williamson, "On estimating the Income Effects of British entry into the EEC", University of Surrey Papers in Economics no. 5, June 1971.

[9] As reported in M. Miller op. cit.

[10] In J. Pinder, "The Economics of Europe", Knight 1971. I have only seen press reports of this publication.

[11] N. Kaldor, "The Distortions of the White Paper", *New Statesman*, 16-7-71.

[12] These are the estimates by Miller and Josling as summarised in M. Miller op. cit.

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1970 White Paper stated a maximum figure for the three items of £670m. per year. The 1971 White Paper, with becoming caution, asserts that the cost to us after the five year transition period cannot be calculated.

Miller however believes that the Government have been working on a figure of £400m. a year by 1980 i.e. 25 per cent of a total budget of £1,600m. and that this is consistent with the bargaining positions during the negotiations and the trend of contributions agreed during the transitional period (£120m. in 1973 rising to £300m. by 1977). It is assumed, without justification being provided, that we will receive back £100m. a year chiefly in payments to farmers.

But it is a very risky thing to assume that the budget will be held at this level. The cost of CAP rose from £205m. in 1966/7 to £1,096m. in 1971. In 1970 the EEC were working on a figure of £1,750m. a year for the enlarged EEC in the late 1970's. In July 1970 a British government estimate was that we might have to pay £570m. out of a total of £1,870m. by 1980 receiving back £100m. i.e. paying 31 per cent and receiving back 6 per cent. Kaldor is certain that the costs will rise above £2,000m. and that something like the maximum commitment will be demanded.

Other estimates[13] (based on the "optimistic" view of world food prices) are that our VAT contributions will be much less than the maximum, maybe about £100m., and that levy payments will also be less than the 1970 White Paper feared. These estimates come to a net budget contribution of between £300m. and £500m. a year.

Whatever the actual contributions called for it is clear that we shall have to pay a share which is greater than our share of Community GNP (expected to be between 16-18 per cent) and which is far and away greater than any possible receipts from the Fund. Our farmers are relatively efficient so we cannot command much by way of modernisation grants and we don't produce surplus food, so we will not cause the EEC to spend much on that account. But we do import food and hence will pay large sums in levies. We also trade extensively in industrial goods and hence will have to pay large amounts on account of customs duties. The 1971 White Paper sought to quieten worries by concluding its section on costs by saying "—the Community declared to us during the course of the negotiations that if unacceptable situations should arise 'the very survival of the Community would demand that the institutions find equitable solutions' ", (para. 96).

Placing together the various estimates of the balance of payments consequences of changes in industrial and food trade, and the payments to the EEC budget we get a range of estimates of the total impact cost of joining. It must be remembered that these estimates include calculations for only some of the effects of joining. In particular no estimate has included a figure for capital movements. For what they are worth the Kaldor figures assume a range of from £665m. to £1,095m. net per year after the transitional period. The 1970 White Paper figures imply a range of from £430m. to £1,100m. net, assuming payment of levies and customs duties but with no VAT being required at the lower end. The 1971 White Paper, according to Miller, has as its background a Government estimate of net payments of £350m. a year, without estimating the industrial trade balance. Other estimates, mainly on the basis of optimistic food price estimates, are lower.

The Effect on Incomes

The balance of payments effects of joining are not the same as the effects on incomes in the country. Budget payments and higher prices for food do involve an income loss as well as a balance of payments deficit. But they, and also the effects of tariff changes, may involve an additional loss insofar as if the total effect of joining is to create a balance of payments deficit then by one means or another that has to be corrected. If it is corrected by devaluation, then the additional cost is that we are paying higher prices for imports in comparison with the prices we receive for exports. If we correct the deficit by deflation, the additional cost is much greater since then we create unemployment to reduce imports as well as to cheapen export prices in relation to import prices. For what they are worth the estimates of total "income" or "welfare" effects range from £1,100m. down to £450m. per year. Again the lower estimates depend crucially on the optimistic guesses as to the trends in world food prices.

The "Dynamic Effects"

Against the general consensus of opinion that the immediate impact effects of joining the EEC will be negative, is set the hope of long term "dynamic" benefits. Businessmen are used to demanding a certain minimum rate of return before agreeing to make an investment, and the further into the future the returns are, the more will they be discounted when a comparison is made between returns and costs. On this basis the up to £1,000m. per year or so of costs should require very large long term returns indeed. As it is there is no guarantee at all that the returns will even be positive, for the economy as a whole.

The "dynamic" effects usually referred to are the economies of scale that a larger "home" market may facilitate, the benefits of greater competition, the inducement to invest more, the fact that "high technology" industries require a large market so that

[13] By Miller and a combination of Josling and Williamson's work summarised by M. Miller op. cit.

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its firms can grow to the size needed to justify the research and development expenditure on which they depend. The high growth rates of EEC countries will be infectious for new members. Belgium was a slow grower like UK till the EEC transformed it. If we join we will attract more US investment. (Alternatively it is argued that if we join we can keep Europe out of US hands). Some of these arguments were discussed in Part I of this article.[14]

The 1971 White Paper assumes that the case is made out and relies simply on the proposition that the existing EEC members think that the formation of the Market was beneficial, and that our own CBI is in favour of us joining.

Williamson[15] has made an attempt to quantify some of the possible effects. The evidence for general economies of scale is not very clear, but he believes that in particular cases that are especially relevant to the intra-industry specialisation (rather than inter-industry specialisation) which is in fact proceeding in the EEC, the economies are very pronounced. Also apart from the advantages of a *big* market there may be advantages of a *growing* market in enabling efficient firms to expand without running into oligopolistic struggles or tariff barriers. Also extra exports will call forth extra investment and this will increase growth. The upshot of his calculations of the effects of trade creation, plus economies of scale, plus the benefits of increased investment is that the measured benefits still don't equal the burden in the next few years of contributions to the budget and the diversion of food trade to high cost suppliers. On this basis we ought not to join. However he feels that there are three arguments to justify joining. (a) Although the effect cannot be quantified, the extra pressure of competition in encouraging efficient managers and penalising lazy ones (the reduction of "X inefficiency") will be very beneficial. (b) the dynamic effects will cumulate over a long period—specialisation and economies of scale take time to achieve. (c) The worst of EEC policies can be changed.

It may be that the contrary arguments are not heard very often because it would be politically difficult to say clearly that British industry is sick and incapable of meeting a vigorous challenge.

But it can certainly be pointed out that whether or not the arguments for the benefits of the EEC to its existing members are correct, there are many aspects of them that do not apply to the UK. The 1970 White Paper accepted that the EEC had the advantage of a large reservoir of agricultural workers, of low defence spending, and of post-war investment in new equipment. It is also the case that the removal of tariffs from 1958 onwards involved a far bigger stimulus than the comparable process can now have for us since tariff levels then were much higher; that the existing members didn't face in the early years the high cost of CAP and a sudden rise in food prices; and that they were not, in forming a Customs Union, sacrificing an established position in another preference area such as we have in EFTA and the Commonwealth. For the UK to accept the heavy impact effects in the hope of dynamic benefits would, in the words of Major, Hays and Grunberger,[16] represent "a triumph of hope over experience".

Capital Movements

There is no disagreement over the likely direction of capital movements after entry. The outflow of capital will strain the balance of payments except to the extent that the reserve flow of profits counteracts it. There is already a good deal of UK investment in the Six. The book value of direct investment was £629m. in 1969 compared with only £278m. by the Six in the UK.[17] Since the recent profitability of investment has been higher in Europe than in Britain, it is expected that when restrictions are removed, the flow will increase. Recent surveys of British firms indicate that many of them intend to increase their overseas investment in Europe. This may of course be partly financed by borrowing inside Europe and hence will not cause a drain.

The net flow will also be affected by the direction of US investment. The book value of direct US investment between 1950 and 1969 rose from £847m. to £7,158m. in the UK. It rose faster inside EEC, from £637m. to £10,194m., but fastest in other countries of Europe (Switzerland, Spain etc.), from

[14] The article in the *National Institute Economic Review*, August 1971, referred to earlier, present tables of productivity growth to compare the EEC with non-EEC countries before and after the formation of EEC, as did the Major, Hays and Grunberger article NIER Nov. 1970. But the 1971 article selects 1950-70, 1958-70, 1962-70, and 1965-70 as the periods for comparison instead of 1950-58, 1954-58 and 1958-69. The comparisons for 1965-70 are more favourable to the EEC but the general conclusion holds—that the comparisons do not provide unambiguous evidence of the benefits of the formation of EEC.
The article also discusses the export price comparisons referred to by Mr. Jenkins in the July House of Commons debate. The ratios of export prices to domestic prices fell in EEC countries during the mid 1960's though not uniformly, but so did the comparable ratios for certain other countries. And in any case this does not necessarily offer the hope of automatic gains in efficiency through increased export demand to new entrants to EEC.

[15] J. Williamson op. cit.

[16] Major, Hays and Grunberger, op. cit.

[17] *National Institute Economic Review*, August 1971, pp. 51-52.

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£249m. to £4,202m.[18] In earlier years apparently US investment in UK was more profitable than that in Europe, but in recent years this has been reversed.

The speed with which the sterling balances are run down will of course be relevant in this context. Presumably this is an item over which some flexibility is possible. We may also have EEC loans to finance this temporarily. But in the loosened conditions of Commonwealth relationships the holders might wish to speed up their withdrawal.

Invisible Trade

In 1969 the UK had a deficit on insurance, banking etc. with the EEC. The City of London expects to do well out of membership, but the restrictive European national legislation in the field of insurance will have to change to facilitate this. As for the rest of invisible earnings the tourist balance is likely to worsen as the cost of living in UK rises. Our earnings from shipping will worsen to the extent that our trade with countries like New Zealand declines.

Dynamic and Impact Effects

The connection between adverse impact effects and the likely direction of dynamic effects has been effectively drawn out by Kaldor.[19] The balance of payments burden would enforce either repeated devaluations or severe deflation. Devaluation would become both more difficult and less effective under the conditions of acceptance of CAP and the Monetary Union. Deflation at home would have consequences with which the UK has become familiar in recent years in inhibiting investment, especially when capital is free to flow outwards. We might have import led stagnation instead of export led growth. The UK might become the "Northern Ireland of Europe".

The danger inherent in this situation can be seen by imagining that this year's world monetary crises had happened at a time when UK was a full EEC member and the Monetary Union was working. We would have been required to float sterling upwards in step with the stronger European currencies. This would have imposed a trading burden over and above the other negative factors arising out of membership. Either UK would face disaster, or the Monetary Union (and CAP) would break down, or the EEC would be forced to give aid. Time and time again in the literature reference is made to the hope that the EEC will not let us starve.

The Recent Negotiations[20]

The first point of interest concerning the negotiations that went on formally for 12 months till June 1971, and informally for considerably longer, is how little they have to say about the ultimate problems of the relationship of UK and EEC. By and large the UK accepts the full implications of the Treaty of Rome and that is that. Most of the negotiations related to transitional matters concerning the time schedule of approach to the real thing, budget payments, tariff reductions, levies on agricultural imports, establishment of "threshold" and "intervention" food prices, the freeing of capital movements, arrangements for joining Euratom, ECSC, the European Investment Bank etc. Only a few matters negotiated will affect the long term voting strength in the institutions, the offer of association to some Commonwealth countries, duty free imports for certain raw materials from Commonwealth sources etc.

On many other matters there is considerable vagueness as to what will happen after the transition. In some cases this is because the EEC have not reached agreement themselves (e.g. Economic and Monetary Union). In other cases we failed to gain points sought during the negotiations. In others it may be that there is an agreement but the public is not being told. Thus we are entering EEC without knowing what the membership contribution will be, what will be demanded of us in respect of sterling balances, which of our regional policies are acceptable, what is expected of us under the Monetary Union, what our future relations will be with EFTA, what the common fisheries policy will be, how far harmonisation of VAT and other taxes will be expected to proceed, what arrangements will be made concerning certain types of capital movements. Even on matters which caused a great deal of discussion there is in effect no agreement. We do not know what will happen to the Commonwealth sugar producers. There is only a promise to review the problem of New Zealand dairy produce in the light of progress by New Zealand towards diversification and progress by the world towards a dairy agreement. On farming we have no guarantee in respect of help to hill farmers, and do not know the position concerning other state aids to farmers. Apparently we have recently succeeded in securing a satisfactory formula for the accession of the Isle of Man.

Even in some matters solely related to the transitional period there is no agreement—the question of labour movement to Northern Ireland, the transitional arrangements for tariffs with EFTA nations who do not join, the implications of the promise to take action if the transitional arrangements dislocate Commonwealth production, relations with the Mediterranean Associated States, etc.

We are really entering into the unknown with, on the one hand, a vague promise of help from the

[18] ibid.

[19] *New Statesman*, 12-3-71.

[20] It is possible that some further items of negotiation will be clarified between the moment of writing (end November) and the signing of the Treaty of Accession in December.

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EEC if the troubles become unbearable, and on the other hand, talk by the Government of using the veto if our vital interests are threatened. Even here we do not know clearly when the unanimnity rule will apply. And in any case there are so many issues on which all members can threaten the veto that obviously such a bluff can easily be called. In the background is the prospect of Anglo-European bargaining over nuclear arms, with our nuclear know-how as the means of securing economic concessions. (The MacMahon Act concerning the exchange of nuclear information between US and UK ends in 1974). It may be true as the 1971 White Paper says (para. 68) "It now seems most improbable that any significant problems remain to be identified". But it certainly is not correct to say (para. 67) "— apart from fisheries all the crucial issues have now been dealt with".

The negotiations do however demonstrate the Government's desperate desire to get into the EEC at all costs. On a whole range of matters the UK bargaining position was abandoned—New Zealand lamb, prices and quantities for New Zealand butter, Australian meat and sugar, Commonwealth sugar in general, transition periods for industry and agriculture, the acceptance that sterling would become a subject of negotiation. The clearest case is that of the budget contributions. The initial UK proposal was that we pay 3 per cent of the budget in the first year and 15 per cent in the fifth year, with three years for "correctives" and a review of the position in the eighth year. This position was held for a long time. Mr. Barber claimed that if no solution was found we could not accept entry. We said that for any contribution over 5 per cent the Six were making a profit out of us. In the event we accepted, roughly, payments of 9 per cent rising to 19 per cent over five years with two years for "correctives" and no review.

In some cases (i.e. sugar) the Government seemed prepared to agree to *any* formula that would avoid holding up negotiations. In other cases they showed a clear desire to avoid going into details when such details might be awkward. Not that the Six went out of their way to make matters easy for them. They published an embarrassing document on the implications of joining for our Coal and Steel industries, and issued their provocative fishery proposals just when the negotiations were most under public scrutiny.

Various acts of the Government taken together indicate if not a pre-empting of the decision to join, then at least a desire to be ready for the great event—the decision to phase out sterling balances (taken before entry negotiations made it necessary), the decision to implement VAT (we originally asked for a five year transition, the EEC demanded a three year transition, but we decided to do it in two years), the imposition of food levies and the consequent change in the farm support system prior to entry, the phasing out of regional employment premia which conflict with EEC rules.

Why Join?

The government's indecent haste to get into the EEC in the face of a hostile public opinion is all the more noteworthy when it is realised what a fundamental change in Britain's historical world role is involved. In the early post-war years successive governments tried to restore the imperial position on which the power of the dominant sections of British capitalism had always depended. Certainly we couldn't go it alone but we could hope to get by with the minimum of disruption in the structure of the economy and in the relative positions of the constituent sections of the capitalist order, by accepting a role as a junior partner on the world scene to the all-powerful USA. Churchill spoke of three circles—the Commonwealth, the English speaking world, and (third) Europe. We had the special relationship with America including the nuclear weapons alliance; we could continue to operate sterling as a reserve currency in a subordinate role to the dollar. Of course we also wanted to share in the post-war trade boom in industrial trade between industrial countries.

We thus sought to involve ourselves in Europe, but to keep the arrangements at the level of an industrial Free Trade Area which would give us tariff free trade inside Europe, whilst permitting us to maintain our preference area with the Commonwealth, and import food from outside the Continent as our world trading role demanded. When this failed, in the mid-1950's, negotiations on membership with the EEC were undertaken but both in 1961-3 and in 1967 more of a fight was put up than in 1970-71 on account of our world and Commonwealth interests. Now a drastic breaking of links with past sources of imperial prosperity has been precipitously agreed to.

Of course it may be that the government are simply hoping that things will turn out all right. Just as the Six were lucky in floating the Customs Union in a period of industrial boom when all problems were minimised, the hope is that we will have comparable good luck in minimising the transitional problems by having a prolonged spell of bad world harvests and high world food prices. Also we can hope that Economic and Monetary Union will never actually happen, that CAP will collapse, that free movement of capital can be neutralised by borrowing in Europe etc., so that we will in the end be left simply with an industrial Customs Union and separate national policies for agriculture.

But these hopes may not be fulfilled. And, looked at in terms of national aggregates, joining the EEC seems a very poor investment, with high costs, and

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returns which might just as easily be negative as positive, especially when one considers the possible results of the operation of the Economic and Monetary Union, if and when it is successfully operated. But of course the question is not being asked in terms of national aggregates. The Labour Party may have seized this issue to present themselves as the party of the nation rather than of a class, but the Conservative powers-that-be are very sensibly making calculations of their class interests. The investment may look different when, with a little luck, the costs and the benefits can be paid and received respectively by different sections of the population.

The overall "income" costs of membership referred to earlier have different impacts on different groups. For instance Kaldor's calculations note that alongside the costs go the change in the method of financing agriculture, and the tax and insurance changes which will shift the burden of taxation away from profit earners. So (some) farmers, distributors and the higher income groups may gain. The burden will fall on the industrial working class for whom the paying of the costs might mean a fall in real wages of around 10 per cent. Similarly the calculations of the effects on trade can be broken down into widely varying impacts on different industries.[21] Not that this is necessarily very enlightening since the predominant effect of the Customs Union seems to be not inter-industry but intra-industry specialisation i.e. varying prospects not for different industries as much as for different sections of an industry and even for different individual firms.

Undoubtedly many of the firms that will expect to benefit and which are pressing for entry along with the City finance capitalists are the very big firms. And British big firms are amongst the biggest in the world. But as was claimed in Part I of this article this is not to be seen as the large firm overstepping the bounds of the national state in order to operate in a larger unit with comparably larger-than-state sized supranational organs of government. They seek to join EEC but they need the power (such as it is) of the British State in their international operations more than ever. By joining EEC they hope that British State participation will prevent discrimination against their trade and their investments. The mere level of the tariff erected round the EEC is only a small part of the means whereby the Six can discriminate against the trade of outsiders.

But paradoxically many of the large UK firms, and the City, are those which have always traded on a wide international scale and whose interests were bound up with the wider concept of Britain's imperial world role. Here again international operations require the protection of State backing in a world where what is involved is not so much gunboats creating trade amongst savages, as the power of the State to deter another State from operating discrimination in trade and investment policy.

The world is no longer quite so clearly dominated by one imperialism, but rival groupings have the power to do enormous damage to one another. Big firms in Britain may well feel that the British State is not powerful enough to protect them internationally, and that by entry into EEC they can gain the backing of a very powerful negotiating alliance. This, together with the hope that the City will become the channel for the increasing flow of European capital outwards to the world, implies a qualification to the proposition that the UK's international role is being drastically abandoned. Rather what is happening may be that, in a world of changing relative strengths, a new protector is being sought, when the old one shows signs of weakness.

Undoubtedly also there are many smaller firms whose relative efficiency will enable them to do well inside the Market. But this sort of consideration is not the entire explanation of why, by and large, British capitalism has fallen into line with the prospect of entering EEC—including many sections which must be seriously concerned as to their prospects. The collective hope is that joining EEC is the way by which working class militancy can be contained. Competition from the Market, and the rules imposed by the Market, will be held out as the reasons why wage restraint must be exercised and why Britain cannot go its own way with measures of social reform, We will have surendered some of those controls over the economy necessary to pursue an independent policy. We will have to conform to the capitalist rules of the game. This motivation is the stronger the more desperate do employers become over the collapse of British profit margins in recent years. Joining EEC may be fraught with peril but staying out with present policies also holds out very indifferent prospects. Consideration of genuine alternatives would be ideologically repulsive. In this untidy situation the Conservative Party fulfils its role by mobilising in defence of their general class interests those with strong reasons to doubt their own viability inside the Market, alongside those who fully expect to hit the jackpot.

These calculations could be wrong. The gamble might fail and the social tensions generated by economic crisis might worsen. But whether ruling class strategy is confused or not, it is important that the working class should be clear as to the prospect

[21] Several recent studies include:
(a) S. S. Han and H. A. Liesner. "Britain and the Common Market", Cambridge University Press, 1971.
(b) Board of Trade Journal, 8-7-70.
(c) A "Guardian" Survey reported in July 1971.
(d) A survey by Hoare Govett, stockbrokers, reported in the press 1-11-71.

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ahead. The dominant sections of British capitalism may have enjoyed the fruits of empire in the past, and may now be to a greater or lesser extent ready to wind up the enterprise. But if there is a bill to be paid for the operation, they intend that others shall pay it.

The Althusser Case
Part 1. Marxist Humanism

John Lewis

The categorical imperative to overthrow all conditions in which man is a humiliated, enslaved, despised and rejected being.*
Karl Marx

The post-war years in France saw a great swing towards Marxism. After the defeat of Germany the reactionary governments of country after country collapsed and were swept aside. Everywhere socialism was on the ascendant. In Western Europe too the tide of socialist thought flowed strongly and there was a great upsurge of Marxist writings. This was greatly influenced by the philosophical theories of those central-European Marxists who had re-discovered the Hegelian basis of Marx's thought, notably Lukacs and Korsch. The hitherto unknown texts of the Marx of 1844 which had first appeared in the thirties but were lost sight of during the War were being translated and eagerly read and studied.

Such works as Sartre's *Existential Marxism* became popular with its emphasis on *commitment* as the realisation of the "authentic" person. Mounier's "personalism" represented a parallel movement of a humanist kind which found support in the notion of *alienation*, which Lukacs emphasised as part of the essential Hegelianism of Marx.

Two diverging trends became evident. While one strongly held to the whole corpus of Marx's writing, but found in them a humanism which had been missed, at the same time emphasising the importance of Hegel for a real understanding of Marx, the other counterposed the recently studied works of the younger Marx to the established and familiar texts of the older, interpreting the earlier writings in terms of a moralistic humanism and of an existentialism which laid stress on the importance of the human will (of voluntarism) and personal decision as the effective force in revolutionary change. They regarded the later and now generally accepted works of Marx, such as *Capital*, as reflecting a decline of Marx's ideas into determinism and a preoccupation with economics. For them the real Marx was finished somewhere around 1845.

Althusser's *For Marx*

The growing influence of the early Marx, both in the existentialist Marxism of Sartre and in Marxist humanism, was countered by the appearance in 1965 of Louis Althusser's *Pour Marx* (For Marx), which comprised a series of articles which had begun to appear in 1960. This was followed by his *Preface* to *Capital* in 1969, an essay on the *Reading of Capital*, and an interview in *Pensée*. These essays stirred up a considerable controversy: and both in France and in Britain he now has devoted disciples.

Althusser, a former Catholic, has been a member of the French Communist Party for some 20 years. He is a lecturer in philosophy at the Ecole Normale Supérieure.

His strategy is a bold one. He advances an interpretation of Marxism which is directed both at the existentialist humanists on the one hand, and, on the other, at all those Marxists who, while remaining in the central tradition of Marxist thought, are nevertheless profoundly influenced by the Hegelian and humanist philosophy of the young Marx. Althusser's position is that Marx in 1845 totally abandoned all his early views as Hegelian and idealist, and thereafter they play no part at all in his writings. These Hegelian conceptions include "alienation", "the negation of the negation" and "supersession" (Aufhebung)[1].

* Marx, "Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right."

[1] This important Hegelian concept represents the "overcoming" or "supersession" of one historical and economic phase by the next which nevertheless carries over onto the new level in a modified form what was achieved in the earlier. The essential notion is that of "going beyond" or "transcending" capitalism, its basic structure, its economic laws, and its ideology. The German word for this is *Aufhebung*.

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Among the idealist notions which he now once and for all abandoned were two others: the Marxist theory of historical development, which Althusser calls "Hegelian-evolutionism"; and Marxist humanism: the concepts of "man" and "humanism", says Althusser, are terms whereby Marx never again thought reality, after 1845.[2] They must give place to what he calls "Marxist anti-humanism".

This certainly demolishes both existentialist Marxism and moralist theories of socialism: but do we not pay a rather high price for it? It is not the best cure for a toothache to cut off the patient's head. Not only has revisionism been overthrown, but the whole Hegelian heritage that Marx himself, as late as 1873, still regarded as fundamental. In fact everything we have hitherto known as Marxism has gone, and in its place all that is left is a static and scholastic parody of the Marxist method.

The "Break"

Althusser's arguments rest on the basic assumption that after the *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*[3] which in Althusser's opinion represent the high-water mark of Marx's Hegelianism, there was a sudden and dramatic "break" with all his previous thinking. *The German Ideology*, which Marx and Engels wrote in 1845, marks, according to him, the abandonment of these earlier views and the establishment of his final "scientific" position. This is the "break". Discussing the 1844 *Manuscripts*, Althusser says:

> "Marx is furthest from Marx in this book. It is Marx on the brink of change, on the eve, on the threshold—giving the philosophy he was on the point of giving up a last chance".[4]

He speaks of Marx's "sudden and total return" to Hegel in the *1844 Manuscripts*, followed by its complete rejection in the *German Ideology*, where we see:

> "Thoughts in a state of rupture with the past, playing a pitiless game of deadly criticism with all its erstwhile theoretical suppositions".[5]

This story is a complete myth. What evidence is there for this "break"? Althusser claims that Marx himself announced the rejection of his former views when he says in the Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy* that in the *German Ideology* "we settled accounts with our former philosophical consciences". Marx goes on to say that after their publisher refused to print it, having taken fright at the author's reputation, he and Engels "abandoned the manuscript to the gnawing criticism of mice". It was indeed shelved, forgotten, and never published until 1932.[6]

But is this remark about "settling accounts" evidence for a "break"? Why if it was here that he reversed his whole position did he never publish it? But further, Althusser rests his case on the content of the book itself, in which we are to find all Marx's previous writings contradicted and the doctrines of the mature Marx enunciated. Is this the case? Not in the least. So far from refuting his earlier views in the *Manuscripts* of the previous year, Marx *continues* and *develops* their argument, announces no divergence, no repudiation of these views.

Take first Marx's Hegelianism. What exactly was this? It was firstly what Marx believed to be a permanent and vital element in the understanding of man and his world—the notion that in creating his own world by labour, man creates himself; secondly, comes Hegel's theory of alienation—that man's labour somehow resulted in loss as well as gain, a deprivation, a loss of humanity; thirdly, that in due course man overcomes or *transcends* alienation, recovers and fulfils himself. These are all Hegelian concepts, and they are all Marxian concepts. But what Marx did with them was to show that they must be understood in relation to man's material life in the real world. Thus we escape the mystification which Hegel himself is responsible for when he treats the whole process as the manifestation of the Idea. But Marx never abandons these three principles. Enunciated in the Manuscripts of 1844, they are expanded and developed in the *German Ideology*, and embodied and made concrete in *Capital*.

Nor when we turn back to the *Manuscripts* do we find "the high-water mark of Hegelianism", the "idealism" from which Marx is supposed to free himself, the "total return to Hegel", which Althusser sees there, in which "the whole of nature is derived from logical abstraction". On the contrary, we find the theory of man creating his world himself through his labour, which Marx accepts from Hegel and maintains through all his later work, but treats materialistically as meaning that all history is man's self-creation.

We find here in the *Manuscripts*, rather than in the *German Ideology*, in the essay entitled "*Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic as a Whole*", which Althusser appears never to have read, Marx's fundamental criticism of Hegel. It is in *this* essay, rather than in the later work, that Marx "settles his accounts" with Hegel as, indeed, he tells us in the *Preface* to the second edition of *Capital*. But, as he explains, "settling accounts" with Hegel is not rejecting him. (any more than the phrase itself would mean in

[2] *For Marx*, p. 244

[3] First published in 1932. The first English translation appeared in 1951.

[4] *For Marx*, p. 159

[5] *Ibid*, p. 36.

[6] An English translation of the first part appeared in 1958, and the first complete English translation in 1964.

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business). Marx tells us what he accepted and what he rejected. He *accepted* the unity of the subjective and the objective in knowledge, but he *rejected* the derivation of the material world and history from The Idea. All this is in the *Manuscripts* itself, not in the *German Ideology*.

Marx and Alienation

It is here also that Marx raises the question of *alienation*, which Althusser describes as a purely Hegelian conception. It is true that Hegel sees it as a feeling of deprivation or loss resulting from man's creation of the object over against himself—a purely subjective affair. Marx while he accepts the *fact* of alienation, explicitly rejects this explanation and gives it an *economic* interpretation. But does he, as Althusser says, now reject it so completely that "no trace of this Hegelian category appears in the Marx of 1857"?

On the contrary, it immediately reappears in the *German Ideology*—the work in which Marx is supposed to have submitted it to "pitiless and deadly criticism". On the contrary here it plays the central role which it continues to play in all Marx's subsequent work.

Althusser declares that Marx's treatment of alienation in the *Manuscripts* is purely Hegelian, that it remains on the purely subjective level, alienation being the very form and existence of pure Mind in the course of its development. Is this really Marx's view of alienation in the *Manuscripts?* Let us turn to the very first page of this work, where Marx explains what to him, alienation, *really* is.

> "Wages are determined through the antagonistic struggle between capitalist and worker. Victory goes necessarily to the capitalist. The capitalist can live longer without the worker than can the worker without the capitalist", and so on.[7]

This first essay is on *Wages*; the second on the *Profit of Capital*; the third on the *Rent of Land*. Then we come to *Alienated Labour*, and what does Marx say about that?

> "On the basis of political economy, in its own words, we have shown that the worker sinks to the level of a commodity and becomes indeed the most wretched of commodities".

Where is the subjective idealism? Where are the "pure abstractions"?

Clearly this is not the Hegelian view of alienation but Marx's *economic* explanation, and he brings it forward *in opposition* not only to Hegel but to the ideas of Feuerbach as well.

Of course Marx owed a great deal to Feuerbach who showed that so far from the material world owing its being to the idea, our ideas arise from our comprehension of the material world. As he says:

> "I do not generate the object from the thought, but the thought from the object: and I hold *that* alone to be an object which has an existence beyond one's brain".[8]

But Marx rejected Feuerbach's religious explanation of alienation, which was that man felt deprived, unworthy and sinful, *because he had projected his real humanity upon the deity*. Marx had already replied, in an earlier essay,[9] that on the contrary it was not because men were religious that they were alienated, but because of the grievous conditions under which they laboured that they turned to religion for consolation.

Thus Althusser is wrong again. Marx is not under the influence of Feuerbach's Hegelian errors, he is refuting him.

Feuerbach's Theory of Man

But what about Feuerbach's very abstract theory of Man and human nature? Althusser declares that in the *Manuscripts* Marx is guilty of accepting this fundamental Hegelian error of Feuerbach's and that he only escapes from this after his conversion to materialism in 1845.

This is not the case. It is precisely in the *Manuscripts* that Marx refutes this notion of Feuerbach too, and we find "the concept of the human species brought down from the sky, the abstraction to the real ground of earth". Marx sees man as developing and realising his personality as he wrests his living from the earth, and thus makes himself.

What then does Marx mean when he uses the term "species man"? Marx's conception of man is that he is essentially a social being—"species man". The human essence, says Marx, "is no abstraction inherent in each individual", (which is Althusser's idea of Marx's understanding of "Man"). "In reality, it is the ensemble of social relations." But this, says Althusser, "means nothing at all".[10] Any comparative psychologist, however, would explain that man, unlike some solitary predators, is essentially a social animal who becomes himself in society by accepting its obligations and receiving its social benefits, following the acceptance by others of those obligations to create, serve and maintain the human fellowship. In a capitalist society man is still "the ensemble of social relations", but the co-operative relations are contradicted and in part nullified by competitive relations. Man becomes himself only in the pattern of social relations found in common ownership and social control of production for the

[7] *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, p. 1.

[8] Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity*.

[9] *Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*.

[10] *For Marx*, p. 243.

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common good[11]. This is what Marx means by "the concept of the human species brought down from the sky of abstraction to the real ground of earth; what else is it if not the concept of society?"[12]

It is remarkable that Althusser should turn a blind eye on the concept of alienation in the *German Ideology* work, for it is an essential part of the whole of Marx's argument here.[13] Marx uses two words for this notion: *Entfremdung* is used when his intention is to emphasise the fact that man is being opposed by a hostile power of his own making: *Entausserung* when the emphasis is on "externalisation" or "objectification" of this power, as in the capitalist "market".

Turning to the *German Ideology* from which, says Althusser, the Idea has been completely banished, we read that in class society "Man's own deed becomes an alien power opposed to him, which enslaves him instead of being controlled by him". Marx goes on to speak of the "consolidation of what we ourselves produce into an objective power above us, growing out of our control, thwarting our expectations, bringing to naught our calculations . . ." "This *alienation*", he continues, has become "an intolerable power, a power against which men make a revolution" because it rests upon the fact that the great mass of humanity have been rendered propertyless.[14] We recall that the first four essays of the *Manuscripts* were devoted to precisely this explanation of alienation, and here it is again in the *German Ideology*.

In *Capital* in which the term again appears, the economic form which Marx had given it from the first is further developed in the theory of man's labour power as a "commodity", which, inseparable as it is from man himself, is bought and sold in the market. But this is not to abandon the notion of alienation, for it is how Marx explained it from the first, in the *Manuscripts*. This is clearly shown if we turn to the passages in which he first discusses it.

> "In the purchase of men's labour we purchase the man with his labour and he becomes a mere tool or instrument for our ends—a commodity, a thing. The man who becomes a wage labourer finds that his real personality no longer exists even for himself."[15]

In the important *Grundrisse*, or *Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy*, written in 1857 (the date which Althusser regards as heralding the "mature" Marx, now completely free from Hegelianism), Marx is still using the hateful term.

There are over 300 occasions on which he explicitly refers to it by the original term, *alienation*, in this work, and frequently does so in long and important paragraphs. All through *Capital* the emancipation of man from alienation and the fulfilment of his personality is the constant theme. Alienation, indeed, might well be described as the basic theme of the whole of Marx's life-work from its early beginnings in the Essays of 1842 to the day of his death.

Lenin also wholly accepts Marx's theory of alienation as expressed in the *Manuscripts* of 1844. Of course he had not seen them (they were unpublished), but Marx had transcribed the essential pages on alienation into the *Holy Family*, and Lenin wholly endorses the theory as he found it there.[16]

Althusser's "Theoretical Anti-humanism"

On no other topic does Althusser's intellectualism appear more barren than on the question of humanism in Marxism. It cannot be denied that Marx himself affirms his humanist faith frequently and explicitly in his earlier works, and that there is no more warmly humanist analysis of the cruelties and inhumanities of capitalism than *Capital* itself. This Lenin recognised. He had no sympathy with the view that the humanism in *Capital* is alien to Marxism and should be extruded.

> "In few scientific treatises will you find so much heart, so many burning and passionate polemical outbursts. It depicts capitalist society as a living thing with the actual social manifestation of the antagonistic classes in the relations of production."[17]

Of course, we are well aware of the possibility of a rapid, emotional kind of uplift which can call itself humanism, but its existence seems a poor reason for eliminating the basic concern for humanity from socialism. To strip Marxism of its concern for man, for human interests, for the fulfilment of human aspirations and the human personality would be to deny everything that Marx, and after him Lenin, stood for. Humanism, and faith in man, was never for Marx the theory of "abstract" man, though that is Althusser's whole point. But it was Marx himself in his earlier writings, these very writings which Althusser characterises as idealist, as treating man as an abstraction, who criticises Feuerbach for this error—not however, to reject humanism, but to make it concrete, historical and linked with the technological advance of developing man.

One cannot turn to any work of Marx without entering immediately into the human problem. In 1843 we find him proclaiming "the doctrine that man is the supreme being for man . . . therefore with the categorical imperative to overthrow all those

[11] *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts.*

[12] Marx, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 425. (German edition).

[13] There are references to "alienation" and "estrangement" on pages 21, 23, 24, 27, and 28 of the Pascal translation of 1938. It is the theme running through the whole of Part 1.

[14] *German Ideology.*

[15] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts.*

[16] Lenin, *Conspectus of the Holy Family, Collected Works, Vol. 38.*

[17] Lenin, *Karl Marx*, Collected Works, Vol. 18.

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conditions in which man is an abased, enslaved, abandoned, contemptible being."[18] Althusser regards this as "abstract, illusory, utopian and idealist." He condemns it as:

> "the recourse to ethics so deeply inscribed in every human ideology (which) plays a part only in the imaginary treatment of real problems."[19]

We must learn in these matters, he says, to use our scientific concepts, value free, excluding moral considerations and humanistic ideas.

Marx regards the whole process from the standpoint of values. He roots the inhumanity he condemns in the wage system of capitalism and the sale and purchase of labour power as a commodity.

Althusser has never noticed that one of the longest essays in the *Manuscripts*, is Engels' *Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy*, which occupies 34 pages. This was Marx's first introduction to capitalist political economy and to the crises its market system involves. Engels show that:

> "... in the last instance private property has turned man into a commodity whose production and destruction also depend solely on demand. The system of competition has thus slaughtered, and daily continues to slaughter, millions of men. All this we have seen, and all this drives us to the abolition of this degradation of mankind through the abolition of private property, competition and the opposing interests." [20]

Of course, both Marx and Engels had still a long way to go in their analysis of capitalism; but this is a masterly beginning. Is all this "abstract", "philosophical", "illusory"?

"Truly Human" Man

Marx immediately follows this with the important argument in *The Holy Family*, which demonstrates that "the empirical world must be arranged so that in it man may at last be able to experience himself as truly human".[21] The whole of the *German Ideology* is concerned with this very problem, for the alienation of man's condition under capitalism arises because:

> "... we have the majority of individuals from whom these forces have been wrested away, who robbed them of all life content, have become abstract individuals."[22]

It is not Marx who treats man as an abstraction, it is capitalism! And it is Althusser's empiricism! To free the account of man's economic and social condition from "values", "ethical considerations" and "humanism", is not being scientific. It is the worst form of abstractionism.

Alienation is overcome by the social ownership of these forces.

It is in *Capital* that Marx's humanism reaches its full realisation, that this understanding of the economic nature of alienation is now expanded into those moving chapters on the factory system, burning with indignation, which make this work so much more than an analytical exposition of economic and social structure. The ultimate appropriation of the means of production by the community achieves "the realisation of the person". Now "begins that development of human power which is its own true end ... the full development of the human race", of "species man", the realisation of "man's necessity to develop himself."[23]

And this is anathema to Althusser. He emphatically declares that after Marx's conversion in 1845, i.e., the rejection of the Hegelianism of the *Manuscripts*, Marx never again introduces the concepts of man or humanism.[24]

> "The absolute precondition for the positive knowledge of the world itself and its transformation, and of knowing anything about man is "that the philosophical myth of man is reduced to ashes!"[25]

This rejection of humanism carries with it for Althusser the elimination of *man* as the agent of historical development, and of the necessity of the rise of historical consciousness in the proletariat, which was for Marx the indispensible pre-requisite of socialism.

Althusser asserts that "the whole classical Marxist tradition has refused to say that it is man who makes history.[26]

To which Marx replies:

> "It is man, real living man, that makes history; history is not a person apart, using man as a means for its own particular aims: history is nothing but the activity of man pursuing his aims."[27]

Marx refutes Althusser's "theoretical anti-humanism" in the same argument, for he declares

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[18] Marx, *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*.
[19] *For Marx*, pp. 242, 247.
[20] Engels, *Outline of a Critique of Political Economy* from the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*.
[21] *The Holy Family*, p. 176.
[22] *German Ideology*, p. 66. Althusser has assured us that with the final rejection of Hegelian thought which is the essence of the "German Ideology", Marx has finished with alienation. On the contrary, it is the constant theme of the book, and of the "*Grundrisse*", and of "Capital".
[23] *Capital*, Vol. I. pp. 554-708 and Vol. III. p. 945.
[24] *For Marx*, p. 244.
[25] *For Marx*, p. 299.
[26] Althusser, Interview in *La Pensee*, April, 1968.
[27] Marx, *The Holy Family*.

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that "the entire history of the world is nothing but the begetting of men through human labour". "By activity in the world, and changing it, he at the same time changes his own nature and develops the potentialities that slumber within him".[28] Thus, man's making of his world is at the same time his making and re-making of himself and his achievement of his own full development as man.[29]

[28] *Capital*, Vol. I, and Manuscripts.

[29] For Althusser social transformation is the effect of predetermined economic development of an automatic nature. If men play any part it is only because their actions are in the last resort determined by the economic factor.

Discussion Contributions on:

The Strategy of Socialist Revolution in Britain

Jim Brookshaw

For some time now I have had some serious doubts as to the validity of the *British Road to Socialism* as a programme for a Marxist Party. The article by Bert Pearce and the personal study which it encouraged have helped me to understand the *British Road to Socialism* for what it is and what it is not.

In the section on the international movement, Bert Pearce, after briefly describing the impact of the October revolution round the world, writes:

> "Small wonder if the new Marxist Parties, digesting the revolutionary new analysis of Leninism, should take over too mechanically, along with the great fundamental lessons of the Socialist Revolution, some of its experiences and methods which have later been found to be peculiar to its own historical conditions, and not of general application, or even mistakes which the Soviet comrades have themselves been able to reveal and re-assess".

What on earth does all this mean? Which experiences and methods of the October Revolution "peculiar" to it, were taken over mechanically by the new Marxist Parties? Which aspects of the October Revolution are not generally applicable? What "mistakes" of the Bolsheviks have been revealed and re-assessed" by the "Soviet comrades"?

Lenin's Views

In all his works Lenin dealt with real events and real experiences basing his slogans and predictions firmly on both. Because Comrade Pearce leaves these "peculiarly Russian" aspects unstated we have to guess at his meaning, but in the light of the rest of his article this is not too difficult. Lenin considered the problems of the Revolution and the new order to be so important that among other things he wrote a whole book on *The State and Revolution*. In case there are others who believe either Lenin, or the Bolsheviks or their revolution to be "peculiarly Russian" let him or her study *The State and Revolution* put pen to paper and *openly* say where Lenin was wrong!

In this great work* Lenin says:

> "The transition from capitalism to communism is certainly bound to yield a tremendous abundance and variety of political forms, but the essence will inevitably be the same: the dictatorship of the proletariat".

Smashing The State

Lenin, following Marx, has already made it abundantly clear that the old bourgeois state has to be "smashed", "destroyed", and replaced by a new type of state; in the words of Marx: *"The State, i.e., the proletariat organised as the ruling class"*. But this is a State of an entirely new type.

The State, as such, is not an accident. It is the product of class society, the means by which one class (historically the exploiting class) concentrates all the political power in its hands to suppress the

* All references to Lenin and Marx are taken from *The State and Revolution*, V. I. Lenin, Vol. 25, Coll. Works, Eng. Ed. pps. 385-491.

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other classes. The State is bodies of armed men, standing army, police, etc., who exist to maintain the dictatorship of the *bourgeoisie.*

In the 1872 preface to the Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels say that the Manifesto "has in some details become out of date. . . . One thing especially was proved by the Paris Commune viz., that the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made State machinery and wield it for its own purpose". On April 12th, 1871, Marx wrote to Kugelmann:

> "If you look up the last chapter of my *Eighteenth Brumaire* you will find that I declare that the next attempt of the French Revolution will be no longer, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic military machine from one hand to another, but to smash it".

In this Marx restricted himself to the Continent. Of this Lenin says in *State and Revolution:*

> "This was understandable in 1871 when Britain was still the model of a purely capitalist country, but without a militarist clique, and to a considerable degree, without a bureaucracy. Marx, therefore, excludes Britain, where a revolution, even a people's revolution, then seemed possible, and indeed was possible, *without* the pre-condition of destroying the 'ready-made State machinery'."

Lenin goes on to tell us:

> "Today, in 1917, at the time of the first great imperialist war, this restriction made by Marx is no longer valid. Both Britain and America, the biggest and the last representatives of Anglo-Saxon 'liberty' . . . have completely sunk into all-European, filthy, bloody morass of bureaucratic military institutions which subordinate everything to themselves and suppress everything. Today, in Britain and America, too, the pre-condition for every real people's revolution is the *smashing*, the *destruction* of the ready-made State machinery".

How much more true is this today!

Socialist State

Once the bourgeois state has been smashed what is it to be replaced with? In the Communist Manifesto Marx does not give us a worked out answer at that time. As we have seen he says that it is to be replaced with "the proletariat organised as the ruling class". As Lenin said, "Marx did not indulge in Utopias: he expected the *experience* of the mass movement to provide the reply . . ." The Commune gave Marx that reply. It was, he said, "the specific form" of a republic that was to remove . . . class rule itself".

Marx says: "The first decree of the Commune was the suppression of the standing army and its replacement by the armed people". I will chance the criticism of being long-winded and quote Marx again:

> "The Commune was formed of the municipal councillors, chosen by universal suffrage in the various wards of Paris, responsible and revocable. . . . The majority of its members were naturally working men, or acknowledged representatives of the working class. . . . The police, which until then had been the instrument of the Government was at once stripped of all its political attributes, and turned into the responsible and at all times revocable instrument of the Commune. So were the officials of all other branches of the administration. From the members of the Commune downwards, public service had to be done at *workmen's wages.* The privileges and the representation allowances of the high dignitaries of the State disappeared along with the dignitaries themselves. . . .
>
> "Having once got rid of the standing army and the police, the instruments of physical force of the old government, the Commune proceeded at once to break the instruments of spiritual suppression, the power of the priests. . . . The judicial functionaries lost that sham independence. They were thenceforward to be elective, responsible and revocable".

Since all the suppression that is now necessary is the suppression of the old ruling class and since this is done by the *majority of the people,* so a *special force* for suppression is *no longer necessary.* Lenin says "In this sense the State *begins to wither away".*

The Commune of the Soviets

It is now a semi-State, an administration. After the October Revolution in Russia, the *Soviets,* that is the *modern Commune,* became the new State power. Lenin reports that the highest salary paid to anyone in the Commune was 6,000 francs, and adds in a note "nominally about 2,400 roubles or, according to the present rate of exchange about 6,000 roubles. The action of those Bolsheviks who propose that a salary of 9,000 roubles be paid to members of municipal councils, for instance, instead of the maximum sum of 6,000 roubles—quite an adequate sum—throughout the State, is inexcusable".

Those principles of the Commune became the principles of Soviet Russia. The Soviets adopted only those measures of suppression or control necessary to suppress the former ruling class. Only those parties and organisations which sought a restoration of capitalism were suppressed. Lenin favoured a number of Soviet parties. We should remember that the Bolsheviks only considered they were "holding" and looked to the West for the further advance of the revolution. In the meantime Lenin put forward certain measures to

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guard against the danger of bureaucratisation; these included:

1. No standing army, but the armed people.
2. All officials to be elected by the workers with the direct right of recall.
3. All officials to receive the same wages as a skilled worker. Due to the shortage of technicians, etc., they were compelled to allow a clearly defined maximum differential of 4-1.

Lenin described this as a "capitalist differential" and moreover it only applied to non-communists. Communist officials received workmen's wages. This differential was not *formally* abolished until *1931!*

When we compare this to the present day Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, etc., we can see just how far they have degenerated.

Later on Bert Pearce uses a line from the *Communist Manifesto* for an obscure reason; he says that the first step is to "raise the working class to the position of ruling class, to win the battle of democracy". When Lenin uses this line in *State and Revolution* he precedes it by another quote from the Manifesto:

> ". . . In depicting the most general phases of the development of the proletariat, we traced the more or less veiled civil war, raging within existing society up to the point where that war breaks out into open revolution, and where the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie lays the foundation for the sway of the proletariat . . ."

In the same work Lenin shows that if the only way to workers' power is to *"smash—destroy"* the State machine then this is inseperably linked up with the need for the "violent—revolution" for the seizure of power by force by the proletariat.

Role of Parliament

We have seen how in 1917 Lenin said that in Britain, too, the State must be "smashed". Smashed, after the workers have seized power. Of course, it can be justly argued that Lenin also put forward the possibility of a peaceful revolution in certain conditions. The October Revolution itself was relatively peaceful. However, it is one thing to allow for the possibility of a peaceful revolution, and quite another to equate this with a parliamentary victory.

I have dealt with one aspect of the revolution which does not feature in the *British Road*. Perhaps this is one of those "peculiarly Russian" aspects of Lenin and October from which we have "developed". If I could but have half of Comrade Pearce's 10,000 words I would show many more.

Dave Priscott *

While accepting the basic approach of the *British Road*, I welcome this opportunity for a fresh look at our programme and the way we present it. The points I want to deal with relate to violence, Parliament, working-class democracy and "dual power".

Some "left" circles argue that the *British Road* is a non-revolutionary, purely electoral approach to the struggle for Socialism. This is partly deliberate misrepresentation, partly genuine misunderstanding (often arising from a failure actually to read our programme). Some misunderstandings may have arisen from our own presentation of a basically correct strategy.

Twenty-one years ago, when our programme was first drafted, few of today's "leftist" groups were visible. The commonest caricature of communism at that time was that communists were bloodthirsty advocates of violence at all costs. In drafting the *British Road* a conscious attempt was made to refute this misrepresentation. Pollitt's report to the National Executive Committee in July 1950 initiated the preparation of the *British Road*; in outlining his views on the character of the proposed programme he said—amongst other things:— "It must be immediately practicable and *not only possible after some capitalist and Transport House bogey of a bloody revolution*".

In arguing the case for a "peaceful transition" we were not alone. The whole world communist movement was at that time involved in assessing the post-war situation and its consequences for revolutionary strategy. The Soviet Party's view, for instance, has been frequently stated—most recently in the *Short History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union:* ". . . now that there is a powerful group of socialist countries the possibility of *peaceful development of the socialist revolution* has broadened; the specific forms of transition to socialism are becoming richer and more varied. The *parliamentary form of transition* to socialism may also be used." (page 297) (Moscow 1970 edn.)

In controversies within our movement on the related issues of peaceful co-existence and peaceful transition, extreme views were sometimes advanced

* All emphases in quotations are mine. (D.P.)

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on both sides. As Carilllo says: "It must be recognised that in some quarters a false concept of co-existence has appeared; that co-existence on the international plane has been interpreted as a reason for watering down the class struggle, for introducing a kind of pragmatic reformism. This error has been intensified by a mechanical glorification and misrepresentation of the possible peaceful ways." (*Problems of Socialism Today, page 179*).

Our Party never made that mistake, but in refuting old slanders and popularising new ideas, perhaps we sometimes made things sound a bit too easy. (I sometimes feel that as a result we got the worst of both worlds! Many of the older generation still equate "communism" with "bloodshed" and will continue to do so whatever we say; while many of the young generation fell for the "leftist" allegations that we had ceased to be revolutionary).

What Do We Mean by "Peaceful"?

The *British Road*, in the section headed "By Peaceful Means" (page 48) says: "It is in the best interests of the working people . . . that this mass struggle for political power should be carried through *by peaceful means, without civil war*"

This defines our position: By "peaceful" we mean "without civil war". We do NOT mean "without any violence whatsoever". We live in an increasingly violent society. Considering the exploitation of violence on the mass media: press attempts to whip up a pogrom atmosphere against power workers; attempts to stir up inter-racial conflict; clashes between police and pickets even in some limited economic strikes; events in Northern Ireland—it would surely be an illusion to think that mass struggles for political power are going to take place without some violent clashes! Making it all sound too easy is a mistake that could disarm the Party and the working class.

This said, I believe our view that the struggle for power need not involve civil war is correct.

"Peaceful" and "Parliamentary"

"Left" critics sometimes assert that our idea of a "peaceful transition" results from our supposed adoption of a "parliamentary road". This is not so.

Ours is *not* a "parliamentary road" to socialism; it is a road of *mass struggle*", in the course of which Parliament will be both *used* and *transformed*.

Using and transforming parliament does not necessarily involve peaceful means. Crowmell used and transformed Parliament by a civil war which hammered Parliamentary institutions into a very different shape from what they had been before. Our mass struggles too will hammer Parliament into a very different shape, and it is conceivable that in our time too this could involve armed struggle. The struggle to change Parliament is not necessarily, by definition, a peaceful one.

The possibility of a "peaceful" transition does not stem from the use of Parliament; it would be nearer the truth to say that the possiblity of using Parliament arises from the possibility of a "peaceful" transition —although both statements are mechanical expressions of what is a dialectical relationship.

The possibility of a "peaceful" transition rests on our assessment of the international and national balance of class forces.

Civil war has all too often been interventionist war; the changing balance of world forces makes this an increasingly risky gamble for imperialism. If the USA today cannot defeat Vietnam, what hopes are there for them to try it on with us, in a few years time, when all the internal antagonisms of American society will have grown still sharper and when the socialist world will be still stronger?

As to the prospects of armed struggle from within Britain: No ruling class actually does the fighting for itself; it always depends on (1) getting misguided working people to do the fighting for it; (2) its links with the state machine.

Both are serious possibilities which need serious consideration. We are more likely to avoid the dangers if we are aware of them, more likely to fall foul of them if we are not prepared for them.

On the first point: What is essential is to continually strengthen the political consciousness, unity and independent organisation of our already numerically strong working class and to adopt at every stage policies calculated to win it the widest possible allies. Particularly important is the fight against attempts to split the working class by racialism and so lay a basis for some form of mass fascist movement.

On the second point: As the *British Road* says (page 9): "The key state organs which exercise authority in Britain are under the control of the same monopoly groups who control the wealth of the country and serve their interests". But it is also true that there has been an enormous growth in the sheer size of the state apparatus. It now employs many thousands of professional and working people, who increasingly recognise their common interests with the rest of the working class. Trade union organisation, links with the TUC and the Trades Councils, forms of militant action—all are evident. We must consciously encourage these tendencies. The *British Road* begins to face this problem when it says (page 41): "The movement should work for the ending of all restrictions which deter members of the armed forces, the civil service and the police from full participation in democratic political and trade union activities".

To again quote Carillo: ". . . the alliance of the forces of Labour and Culture possesses a power

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unknown to the revolutionary movements of other periods, a power to dissolve and disintegrate from within the organs and springs of power of the modern capitalist state. This State, at its present level, has become so highly technical that it depends far less on the repressive will of a group of politicians, military and police chiefs committed to repression, than on the personnel which in practice handles the machinery of State and can decide whether it functions or is paralysed." (*Problems of Socialism Today*, pages 132-133)

At this point in the argument, the question of "peaceful transition" links up with the attitude to Parliament.

Parliament and Independent Working Class Organisation

> "To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through Parliament—this is the *real essence* of bourgeois parliamentarism. . . . The way out of parliamentarism is not, of course, the abolition of the representative institutions and the electoral principle, but *the conversion of the representative institutions* from mere 'talking shops' into 'working bodies". (*State and Revolution*; Lenin Selected Works, vol. 7 page 44).

No-one in our Party believes that Parliament as at present constituted is a suitable "representative institution" for the exercise of working-class power. What we *do* argue is that mass struggles can (1) smash "bourgeois parliamentarism" by winning the *real* representation of the people in Parliament by *members of the working class*: (2) enforce a step-by-step "conversion" of Parliament into *a different sort of representative institution*—one that *will* be suitable for the exercise of working-class power.

The most indispensable ingredient in our perspective is the conscious, independent activity of the organised working class. It is through the independent activity of its wealth of organisations that the working class will at every stage exercise its leading and decisive role in our revolution. Undoubtedly the creative initiative of our workers will throw up still more new forms of organisation, to meet particular needs and situations. Particularly interesting is the suggestion that Trades Councils should be strengthened by affiliating to them the shop stewards committees in their locality, in addition to the trade union branches which they already represent. Such Trades Councils would be formidable organisations indeed!

We will certainly pass through periods when something of the nature of "dual power" will exist; alongside the "constitutional" organs of state will be increasingly powerful organisations of the working class.

In such a situation there are two alternative lines.

One is, to try to smash the Parliamentary system and replace it by power to "workers councils". This is an attempt mechanically to transfer the experience of Russia in 1917 to Britain in 1972. The consequences of this line would be to (1) isolate the advanced sections of the working class from people who should be their allies but who still regard Parliament as a necessary democratic institution; (2) give the military and bureaucratic heads of state the weapon of "legality" in turning all the forces at their disposal against the working class; (3) therefore leading to inevitable violent repression under conditions most unfavourable to the working class.

The alternative is to use the organs of independent working class power to forcefully press demands for a general election; for a new and different parliament and government; for the legislative measures required from a socialist government; for the changes needed to make Parliament a suitable instrument for the exercise of working class power and to smash the hold of representatives of monopoly on the state apparatus. These demands would not all be achieved "at one blow"; they will demand sustained activity by the independent organisations of the working class over a considerable period. This line (1) gives the working class the best prospect of winning wide allies from other sections of the people; (2) robs the military and bureaucratic heads of state of the weapon of "legality" enabling the working class and its Parliamentary representatives to appeal if necessary "over the heads" of the military and bureaucratic apparatus directly to the rank and file, not only in the name of class solidarity but also in the name of democracy and legality; (3) therefore greatly reduces the likelihood of armed resistance and ensures that if nevertheless it is attempted, the working class can meet it on the most favourable possible terms.

The *British Road to Socialism* **is not** an absolute and final guarantee of a peaceful transition to socialism. But it *is* the only revolutionary strategy for Britain based on a concrete application of Marxist principles to the concrete situation of this country and these times. As such, it deserves to be more vigorously fought for.

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